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LANDOR'S

IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

A SELECTION

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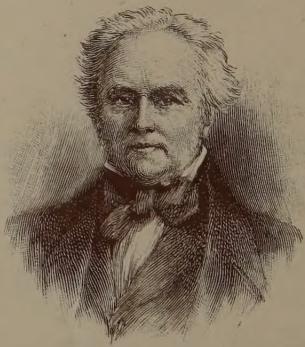

IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

BY

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

A SELECTION

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WITH INTRODUCTION BY
ERNEST DE SÉLINCOURT

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Walter Savage Landor

Born, Warwick . . . . . January 30, 1775.
Died, Florence . . . . . September 17, 1864.

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INTRODUCTION

Among the masters of nineteenth-century literature, Walter Savage Landor holds a distinguished place. As a poet he was eclipsed by the five great luminaries of the romantic revival, yet much of his verse has a high excellence in its own original vein. As a writer of prose none has surpassed him. If he made no striking contribution to the development of thought, he yet gave currency to the ripest wisdom and the noblest reflections; and his imaginary portraits of men and women of all ages are touched with a knowledge and sympathy which show him to have been always at home with great thoughts and great men. Throughout a long life his character and genius made a deep impression upon his more notable contemporaries, from Wordsworth and Southey to Carlyle and Dickens, Browning and Swinburne; and to-day, by the few who know him, he is prized alike for the spaciousness of his thought and for the rare beauty and dignity of his style. But to the wider public he is barely more than a name; and there is probably no modern English classic so little appreciated at his true worth.

The reasons are not far to seek. That proud independence of mind and character, which gives an indisputable grandeur to his life, brought him inevitably into conflict with the tastes and opinions of the world. 'From my earliest years,' he wrote,

'I have avoided society as much as I could decorously, for I received more pleasure from the cultivation and improvement of my own thoughts than in walking up and down among the thoughts of others. Yet I have never avoided the intercourse of men distinguished by virtue and genius; of genius because it warmed and invigorated me by my trying to keep pace with it, of virtue that if I had any of my own it might be called forth by such vicinity.' Communing thus with his own thoughts, in intercourse with his noble friends, and with the still nobler heroes of the past, he could never attain to sympathy with those who moved upon a lower level of intellect and emotion. He walked 'upon the uplands, meditating and remembering', and when summoned to the plains, on which the mundane affairs of life are conducted by ordinary men and women, his haughty but sensitive nature was ill at ease. Generous to a fault, delicately susceptible to all the finer feelings, courteous and polished in demeanour, he was yet irritable and passionate, impatient of weakness or stupidity, quickly roused to anger at real or imaginary wrong, and when roused deeply resentful. His outer life was a series of quarrels, for the most part arising from trivial causes, but bitter enough in their effect upon his happiness, of petty trials which his undisciplined nature rendered intolerable. He was never able to accommodate himself to that world in which the man of genius, no less than others, is called upon to live. He realized it himself; and many of his finest utterances may be regarded as the calm comments of Landor the artist upon the errors and the follies of Landor the man.

That same unyielding disposition which made him difficult to live with has made him difficult to read. He never courted popularity. 'I never ask the public opinion of what I write', he said. 'God forbid that it should be favourable, for more people think injudiciously than judiciously.' This is not ingratiating. It only differs from Ben Jonson's 'By God, 'tis good, and if you like 't, you may', in that it accepts without loss of temper the inevitable indifference of a despised and flouted audience. Landor was content to appeal to the few. But whilst he could never have been widely popular, a closer touch with public opinion would have extended the circle of his influence. It would, moreover, have done something to clear his art of two faults which mar it even in the judgement of that high tribunal whose verdict he sought. Two dangers beset the writer who does not test his work by its effect upon others. His own reflections, profound and trivial alike, gain a special value for him, so that he is prone to expatiate on petty crotchets or prejudices as though they were eternal principles. On the other hand, when his thought is vital and its development in his own mind clear enough, he may give it a semblance of obscurity by the suppression of necessary links in its sequence. Both these faults Landor might have learned to cure by a fuller sympathy with the public he despised; and their correction would have entailed no surrender of his independence and originality, but merely the removal of obstructions which impeded his just recognition.

For Landor's outlook on life, his taste in art and his manner of utterance are alike his own.

He is remote from the literary current of his time. In an age when romanticism was in full flood he kept steadily before him the ideals and the temper of classic art. By the ideas let loose upon the world at the French Revolution he was as deeply moved as Wordsworth or as Shelley, but from their realization he hoped not for a new heaven and a new earth, but rather for a return to the noblest traditions of Athens and of Rome. He was passionately idealistic as any poet or dreamer of the day, and the art in which he sought both refuge and expression was the product of hours of tense excitement, of deep emotional sympathy with his subject. Yet it bears no traces of the throes of its creation; its pervading characteristics are simplicity of design, a careful finish in execution, and a serenity of spirit that proclaims him its master and not its slave. The wide field of subjects over which his writings range gives evidence enough of breadth of reading, possible only to a long and leisured life. But whatever theme he handled he handled in the same severe manner. His intellectual and artistic sympathies were fixed in boyhood by a passion for classical antiquity which other interests could never shake.

At Rugby School he was famous as a brilliant Latin scholar, and throughout his life he wrote as fluently in Latin as in his mother tongue. As an old man he once said, 'I am sometimes at a loss for an English word, for a Latin, never.' There was much, indeed, as Carlyle noted, of the 'unsubduable old Roman' about Landor's character and outlook upon life; and his portraits of the heroes of the ancient Republic, both in their

struggles and in their refined leisure—his Marcellus, his Scipio, his Lucullus—show the insight of a true humanist. And though his knowledge of the Greek language was less accurate, his sympathy with Greek life and culture was as constant and as profound. In the world of her beautiful mythology, in Periclean Athens, in the idyllic scenes of Theocritus, he was equally at home; and Hellenic ideals of art and of life had a reality to him which not only gave him the power to embody them without the intrusion of modern sentiment, but enabled him to handle modern themes in something of their spirit. His proud assertion

> I write as others wrote
> On Sunium's height

was no empty boast.

The direction given to Landor's thought and tastes by his study of the classics was enhanced by a lifelong devotion to Milton, that modern who alone rivalled them in his affections, and rivalled them because he partook so largely of their salient qualities. 'My prejudices in favour of ancient literature began to wear away on reading *Paradise Lost*, and even the great hexameter sounded to me tinkling when I had recited aloud, in my solitary walks upon the seashore, the haughty appeal of Satan, and the repentance of Eve.' Yet to Landor Milton was greater than his art. In Milton he saw one of the sublime characters of the world; and some of his noblest writing is devoted to praise of his hero's superb idealism, his fearless, independent republicanism, his passionate devotion to the cause of liberty and of truth. As far as Landor could be said to have

one model upon whose image he moulded his life and thought, that model was Milton. For Milton's political career, to many of his readers a stumbling-block and to the mere aesthetic critic foolishness, Landor had nothing but eulogy; and Milton's attacks upon hypocrisy, fraud, and priest-craft re-echo in the *Imaginary Conversations*. 'Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely, according to conscience, above all liberties,' is the cry in which Milton gives voice to the root passion of his life. Similarly, Landor asserts that the purpose of all his writing, as far as it has a purpose extrinsic of pure art, is to advocate freedom of thought, or as he picturesquely puts it, 'to remove and consume the gallows which await the independent thinker in any branch of human activity'.

Many of his leading ideas were connected with this passion for liberty and for independence: many of his heroes—Pericles, Demosthenes, Metellus, Washington, Hofer, Kosciusko—those whose lives were kindled to a like passion. His consistent hatred of monarchy sprang from the notion that it must tend to suppress the free development of the individual. 'Men, like trees,' he said, 'acquire robustness and nobility by standing separately. Princes are so educated as to detest the unmalleable honesty which will receive no impression from them, nor do they let you serve them unless they can bend you double.' But his republicanism, like Milton's, saw in democracy as fatal a tyranny as in kingship. It was essentially aristocratic. It desired the rule of the best. And like Milton's, too, it was necessarily independent of party. For the party man

Landor had always a supreme contempt. 'He who declares himself a party man', he said, 'is a registered and enlisted slave. He begins by being a zealot, he ends by being a dupe.' In the reaction which followed the French Revolution, he could oppose with determined hatred the different attempts throughout Europe to reinstate despotic governments, could support with enthusiasm all risings of nations striving for independence. He 'loved liberal measures, liberal institutions, liberal men, whenever they were to be found', but he could never ally himself with those who wished to put fuller political power into the hands of the people.

He called himself a Conservative. He 'would alter little, but correct much'. But he was really an isolated idealist, lifting up his voice for liberty and for a higher tone in national and political thinking. If this independence of party limited his practical influence, at least it kept him faithful to that revolutionary creed upon which Wordsworth and Coleridge, with so many of his peers, turned nervously apologetic backs. And his general reflections are fully as inspiring and suggestive as theirs, with as clear a value for us to-day. Thus he places ambition among the most dangerous of political vices. 'God sometimes sends a famine, sometimes a hero, for the chastisement of mankind.' And he speaks in a fine scorn of the jealousy with which one nation is apt to view its neighbour's prosperity—'a prosperity raised by her industry, by the honesty of her dealings, by excelling us in the quality of her commodity, in the exactness of her workmanship, in punctuality, and in credit.' As for the

incitement of war on such grounds, 'Hell itself,' he exclaims, 'with all its jealousy and malignity and falsehood, could not utter a sentence more pernicious to the interests of mankind. It is the duty of every state to provide and watch that no other lose an inch of territory or a farthing of wealth by aggression. Correct your own habits and you need not fear your rivals. The aggrandisement of a neighbour is no detriment to us. If we are honest and industrious his wealth is ours.'

Lofty as was the plane from which Landor judged human affairs, he was constitutionally averse to all thought which had no practical bearing upon daily life. The sanity, the lucidity, the reserve which seemed to him to be of the very essence of Greek temper made him suspicious of any tendency towards mysticism. For those who

> reasoned high
> Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
> Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
> And found no end, in wandering mazes lost,

he felt a truly Miltonic contempt. This was not because his own conceptions were materialistic, but because he was content to leave alone those matters on which no certainty could be attained, from whose discussion he saw no result save a loss of charity and self-control. 'I hold it', he said, 'the most unphilosophical thing in the world to call away men from useful occupations and mutual help to profitless speculations and arid controversies.' Hence sprang his rooted dislike to Plato. Plato's subtle dialectics seemed to him a barren linguistic trickery, and his imagina-

tive reaching after a truth that could never be defined, an occupation essentially un-Hellenic. Landor understood and appreciated the genius of Plato no better than the average Athenian must have done. In a long dialogue, of high value despite its travesty of the greatest thinker of the ancient world, Plato is put before us as a conceited and self-seeking sophist, routed at every turn of the argument by Diogenes, the true philosopher, whose mind is wholly set upon the search for practical truth. 'The bird of wisdom flies low, and seeks her food under hedges: the eagle himself would be starved if he always soared aloft and against the sun.'

Where all his greater contemporaries were conscious or unconscious Platonists, Landor kept his feet planted firmly upon earth. 'The best sight', he said, 'is not that which sees best in the twilight;' and again, 'to see distant things better than near is a clear proof of defective sight.' He would have agreed with the modern critic of Maeterlinck that, after all, the temple of mysticism is situated in the same street as the cave of Adullam. Yet the calm and the courage of spirit with which he confronts human destiny has something in common with the supreme triumphs of transcendental experience; and they render the same tribute to 'that soul which is the eternity of thought'. Of old age, he writes: 'Let us yield to it, just as season yields to season, hour to hour, and with a bright serenity, such as Evening is invested with by the departing Sun.' And he lays to rest the terrors of death with the sublime reflection, 'What if it makes our enemies cease to hate us, what if it makes

our friends love us more!' Here are no obstinate questionings, no blank misgivings, but rather the steady clear-eyed vision of a man who 'knows what life and death is', and who, schooled to the temper of calm acceptance, cherishes every breath of the beauty and fragrance of life. Hence Epicurus was the philosopher who had for him the deepest attraction; and the discourse which Epicurus holds with his young friends Leontion and Ternissa was his favourite among the *Imaginary Conversations*. The Epicurus whom he presents is not the apostle of what is falsely called epicureanism—a perversion, like all popular conceptions of religion, of the ideas of its founder—but rather the Epicurus of history idealized, accepting the joys of nature and life which come in his path, refusing to be disturbed by angry threats of enraged neglected deities, joyfully taking the benefit that comes spontaneously, 'wishing no more for what is a hair's breadth beyond our reach than for a draught of water from the Ganges', and because he lives so, fearing nothing from a future life.

The same dominant ideas are developed in his writing upon religion and in his studies of the religious character. He has little sympathy with the mystic, and for the theological dialectician or controversialist nothing but contempt; but his appreciation of the simple religious nature whose faith is shown in works is both full and subtle. For Dante as poet and as man he had full admiration, but for the characteristic thought of Dante no more understanding than he showed for Plato: the genius of mediaeval Italy was summed up for him in the essentially human,

sunny, unmediaeval Boccaccio. It is significant that in his conception of Joan of Arc there is no allusion to those mystic relations with the unseen with which mediaeval superstition invested her. She is simply the maid of action and of self-renunciation, and is presented to us in contrast with Agnes Sorel, the king's mistress, who has all the externals of religious faith without the character to give them reality.

Agnes. But if the saints of heaven are offended, it would be presumptuous in the king to expose his person in battle, until we have supplicated and appeased them.

Jeanne. One hour of self-denial, one hour of stern exertion against the assault of passion, outvalues a life of prayer.

Agnes. Prayer, if many others will pray with us, can do all things. . . . I will throw myself on the pavement, and pray until no star is in the heavens. Oh! I will so pray, so weep.

Jeanne. Unless you save the tears of others, in vain you shed your own.

Agnes. Again I ask you, what *can* I do?

Jeanne. When God has told you what you ought to do, he has already told you what you can.

Landor judged of religion by its practical and vital force. 'The good citizen and the calm reasoner come at once to the same conclusion; that philosophy can never hold many men together; that religion can; and those who without it would not let philosophy, nor law, nor humanity exist. Therefore', he urges, 'it is our duty and interest to remove all obstruction from it, to give it light, air, space, and freedom.'

'Light, air, space, freedom', these are in Landor's eyes essential to healthy spiritual growth. Hence his impatience both of superstition and of persecution. The darker side of Roman Catholicism

has never been more ruthlessly exposed than in his portraits of Louis XIV and Father La Chaise; he often takes it as a type of all that is venal, tyrannical, and mystifying in religion. But such vices are not the monopoly of one Church. Calvin has as much to answer for as any Pope. 'Even if our country is not Roman Catholic,' he says, 'we all live under a kind of popish government. There are popes in all creeds, in all countries, in all ages.' And wherever intolerance is found, freedom of thought suffers. The dialogue between Melancthon and Calvin is chiefly devoted to the contrast between the inexorable dogmatist who would force his opinions down the throats of his fellow creatures and the true Christian who, deprecating controversy, preaches a larger charity. 'I remember', says Melancthon, 'no discussion of religion in which religion was not a sufferer by it, if mutual forbearance and belief in another's good motives and intentions are (as I must always think they are) its proper and necessary appurtenances.' Upon outward observances he lays small store. 'Religion is too pure for corporations; it is best meditated on in privacy, and best acted on in ordinary intercourse with mankind. If we believe in revelation we must believe that God wishes us to converse with Him but little, since the only form of address He has presented to us is an extremely short one. He has placed us where our time may be more beneficially employed in mutually kind offices. Articles of faith are innocent in themselves, but upon articles of faith what incontrollable domination, what insupportable prerogatives, what insolent frauds, have been asserted and enforced. I am ready to

be of that church which has the fewest of them.' And high among the Christian virtues Landor places the duty of cheerfulness. 'Be assured', says Boccaccio, in whose mouth he puts many of his most deeply-felt beliefs, 'our heavenly Father is as well pleased to see His children in the playground as in the school-room. He has provided both for us.' And again, 'I devoutly hold to the sacrament and the mysteries—yet somehow I would rather see men tranquillized than frightened out of their senses, and rather fast asleep than burning. Sometimes I have been ready to believe, as far as our holy faith will allow me, that it were better our Lord were nowhere, than torturing in His inscrutable wisdom, to all eternity, so many myriads of us poor devils, the creatures of His hands. . . . I would be a good Catholic, alive or dead. But, upon my conscience, it goes hard with me to think it of Him, when I hear that woodlark yonder gushing with joyousness, or when I see the beautiful clouds, resting so softly one upon another, dissolving—and not damned for it.'

Such is the character of the thought that Landor scatters in profusion throughout his writings. Hardly a page is without its memorable words, not flaunted to dazzle the reader, nor fondled as though their author was loath to part with them, but cast from him with secure and easy mastery. 'Thought', he writes, 'is never thrown away: wherever it falls, or runs, or rests, it fertilizes.' Open our Landor where we will, we cannot read far before we meet some wise saw, some striking image, that arrests the attention and sets the mind working; whilst if we light upon one of the

many best passages, it will go hard with us to match its power to brace the intellect and ennoble the heart. There may be nothing new in the ideas that Landor presents: the originality is rather in the man than in his ideas, in their emotional value rather than in their intellectual content. It is the function of the artist not so much to discover truth as to make it current. There is little truth that familiarity has not degraded to the commonplace; and the minor artist, in despair of material so unpromising as truth, is tempted into paradox. 'Paradox', as Landor tells us, 'is dear to most people: it bears the appearance of originality, but it is usually the talent of the superficial, the perverse, and the obstinate:' it is the glory of artistic genius to quicken the commonplace and reinstate it once more as vital truth. This is Landor's achievement. Schooled by the greatest masters, he yet accepts nothing at second hand. He is always independent, always sincere. The application of his ideas to particular persons and situations may at times be prejudiced enough: in generalization he is always great, stamping on his utterances the impress of a noble and distinguished personality, and by the felicity of their phrasing and wealth of their imaginative colour giving them life, and beauty, and fertilizing power.

Landor's literary reputation rests most securely upon his prose. But though he realized from the first that prose was his 'study and business', he was in no hurry to establish his pre-eminence. He was a poet of rare distinction, if not of fame, at twenty-five years old; he was nearly fifty when, in 1824, he produced the first series of his

Imaginary Conversations. 'All strong and generous wine', he tells us, 'must deposit its crust before it gratifies the palate', and in his earlier prose, discursively critical of politics, literature, and society, still more perhaps in his verse, his experience of life and his command over the resources of language can alike be seen attaining to mellowness and maturity. The Imaginary Conversation was a form of art most clearly suited to bring out the best elements in his genius and to minimize the worst. He had not that feeling for construction, that clear consecutive manner, necessary to a writer of good narrative or complete drama. When he takes upon himself to tell a story in prose he often tells it badly; when he should keep to one point he is liable to wander from it. A striking image, a stirring reflection such as may come to him at any moment from some side-light upon his subject, is apt, when the emotion is not tense, to take him off his chosen track into some alluring by-way. But such is the way of conversation, which is most fruitful when its course is least rigorously controlled. Landor loved dialogue for its 'facility of turning the cycle of our thoughts to whatever aspect we wish.' Moreover, it responded to a distinctive quality in his genius. He was constitutionally incapable of clear abstract thinking; but when, in the manner of the dramatist, he could merge his personality in that of other men, thoughts would flash upon him like sparks struck out from the contact of mind with mind, of character with character. 'It has always appeared to me', he says, 'that conversation brings forth ideas readily and plenteously, and that the ideas of one person no sooner come out

than another's follow them, whether upon the same side or the opposite.' Landor drew out his own thoughts upon the same principle. And he delighted to justify his method by precedent. 'The best writers of every age', he reminds us, 'have written in dialogue: the best parts of Homer and Milton are speeches and replies: the best parts of the great historians are the same: the wisest men of Athens and of Rome converse together in this manner, as they are shown to us by Xenophon, by Plato, and by Cicero.' And to this method he remained faithful. To the *Imaginary Conversations* he added throughout the rest of his life, till they numbered one hundred and fifty. Of his other prose writings, *The Citation of William Shakespeare* and the *Pentameron* are protracted dialogues with narrative interspersed, and *Pericles and Aspasia* was composed in the form of intimate and intimately connected letters which, like all correspondence worthy of the name, are of the nature of conversation conducted from a distance.

The range of characters whom Landor reveals, and through whom he reveals himself, is unrivalled by any other author. Most felicitous, perhaps, in his delineation of ancient Greece and Rome, of the Italy of the Renaissance, and of his native land from Plantagenet times down to his own day, he hardly leaves a country or a civilization unrepresented in his gallery of illustrious portraits. 'The noble mansion', he held, 'is most distinguished by the beautiful images it retains of beings passed away, and so is the noble mind.' With the heroes of the past he loved to commune in that solitude that was to him best society.

'Among the chief pleasures of my life,' he tells us, 'and among the commonest of my occupations, was the bringing before me such heroes and heroines of antiquity, such poets and sages, such of the prosperous and unfortunate, as most interested me by their courage, their eloquence, or their adventures. Engaging them in the conversations best suited to their characters, I knew perfectly their manners, their steps, their voices, and often did I moisten with my tears the models I had been forming of the less happy.' Thus his imagination was able to call them from the shades, and see them in their habit as they lived; to him, as to Wordsworth, there was

> One great society alone on earth,
> The noble living and the noble dead.

History was to Landor a succession of vivid personalities, whose actions and whose thoughts revealed not only themselves, but the characteristics of the time which produced them. To know them was to know their age. In his presentation of them he was quite careless of historical accuracy, of date, place, or situation. He is full of anachronisms and discrepancies in literal fact. It was not the letter but the spirit as he conceived it that he wished to reproduce, and he felt quite free to take any liberties with historical fact which tended to bring out the essential qualities of his dramatis personae. For he was artist primarily, not historian. Thus, in a conversation of exquisite beauty, the Lady Lisle and Elizabeth Gaunt, two heroic women judicially murdered by Judge Jeffreys for harbouring rebels, are brought together by Landor in the hour before their

execution. As a matter of fact they never met. But the fiction is justified by the opportunity it affords for revealing to us the inner springs of their natures. And similarly, in no way could the character of Catharine of Russia be more vividly presented to us than at the very moment when the murder of her husband, long and eagerly planned, is at last executed, and when in transports of suppressed excitement she stands with her more timid confidante at the door of the palace, and hears his blood dripping upon the floor, and the patter of the dogs' feet as they carry the marks over the palace stairs. To this dialogue Landor added a note significant beyond its actual context. 'It is unnecessary to inform the generality of readers that Catharine was not present at the murder of her husband. Nor is it easy to believe that Clytemnestra was at the murder of hers. Our business (i.e. the business of Aeschylus and all true dramatic writers) is character.' His practice is the same when his object is less obviously dramatic, and his conversation interesting rather from its ideas than from the tensity of the situation. Thus Bacon talks with Hooker at a date when Hooker had already been in the grave some ten years. Machiavelli refers to the Spanish Armada and the wars in the Netherlands. Landor does not even scruple to put into the mouths of Greeks or Romans allusions to characters and events of his own day. But he is always true to his conception of character and nationality, representing in his dramatis personae those qualities in which, as it seemed to him, not only the individuality of the speaker, but also the genius of his nation

and the peculiar spirit of his age, found clear and forcible illustration.

For his discursive dialogues he selects characters from all epochs of history, who represent ideas sympathetic with his own; either pitted against antagonists whose opposition places them in high relief, or in converse with those whose friendly understanding can elicit their most intimate reflections. Thus, as we have seen, Epicurus discourses with his friends, whereas Diogenes engages in dialectic with his adversary. Similarly, Epictetus reveals his simple sincerity in contrast with the worldly-minded Seneca, the sweet reasonableness of Melancthon's Christianity is contrasted with Calvin's domineering and dogmatic intolerance, and Marvel sings the praises and defends the honour of Milton to the deprecating time-server, Bishop Parker; whereas Marcus Cicero converses of philosophy with his brother Quinctus on the eve of his last birthday; Barrow gives wise counsel to his young pupil Newton, and Washington and Franklin discourse of liberty and of the future of America and England. In the shorter, more dramatic, conversations, Landor displays in active exercise those virtues and vices which have formed the theme of his more discursive dialogues. Superstition, and cruelty, its constant ally, are exposed with a ferocious humour in the broad comedy of his Louis XIV and Father La Chaise, in a lighter satiric spirit the economies and the diplomatic deceits of Queen Elizabeth are exhibited in her conversations with her sister, with Cecil, and with her French suitor; whilst occasionally, as in the delicate portraiture of the Duchesse de

Fontanges, the foibles of his victim are touched with so light a hand as barely to affect the charm of the character portrayed.

But Landor is most successful with characters of more heroic build, pre-eminent either in noble action or in their capacity for suffering, great by a courage that is not merely physical, but is the index of moral and spiritual grandeur—by love that triumphs even in its apparent defeat, or by that submission to cruel destiny or unjust doom which is a proof not of man's cowering will, but of his unconquerable mind. Like the true classic artist in his outlook upon life, he is always arrested by the greatness of the soul of man. His modern sentiment is revealed by the larger emphasis he lays upon the element of tenderness with which for him greatness is ever associated. Of what passes in the world for greatness—the power of a tyrant with brutal lusts or low selfish desires—he has given many pictures; but bold and striking as they are, they tend to be exaggerated, and lack the true psychological insight with which he penetrates into those whom he can view with less bias. They are indeed dangerously like stage tyrants. Such characters, though they dominate the stage on which they act, as indeed they dominate the stage of life, are of interest to Landor chiefly as dramatic foils. Thus, Peter the Great, with his total lack of natural human feeling, throws into relief his highly strung, susceptible son, Alexis, who is swayed by emotions and inspired by ideals incomprehensible to his father, and yearns for a love of which his brutal parent is wholly incapable. In a scene conceived

on similar lines, Henry VIII visits Anne Boleyn on the night before her execution. He is half drunk, and wholly oblivious of her tender love for him and for her child, now boisterously jocose, now hurling at her shameful charges which he half knows to be false. He laughs at her memories of a happier past, and taunts her as she pleads not for forgiveness for what she has not committed, but rather for some return of the Henry that she still loves. These portraits of Peter and of Henry are undoubtedly overdrawn, but their very exaggeration serves an obvious artistic purpose. It strengthens our sense of pathos at the sight of an exquisite fragile beauty, 'beauty that is no stronger than a flower' trodden under a wanton and muddy heel. Landor's hatred of cruelty and tyranny was such that his art was sometimes at its mercy: in dealing with them alone does he seem to forget that classical maxim, *μηδὲν ἄγαν*, to which, as a rule, he adhered with bare severity. Not a few critics have felt that Peter's voracious appetite on hearing of his son's death is over-emphasized, and would have preferred, at least, the omission from his menu of the 'caviare and good strong cheese'. But Landor's real interest in these two dialogues is centred in Alexis and in Anne Boleyn. He delighted to delineate those rare and delicate souls, of whom it might be said that

> injuries
> Made them more gracious, and their nature then
> Did breathe its sweetness out most sensibly,
> As aromatic flowers on Alpine turf,
> When foot hath crushed them.

Landor's art is at its finest when his characters

are less fiercely contrasted, and when the tyrant has some redeeming qualities, even if he is incapable of entering into the subtler emotions of the heroine. Such is the case in *Leofric and Godiva*, perhaps Landor's most famous dialogue, as it was certainly among his own favourites. Leofric's love, after its own boisterous fashion, is perfectly genuine, and we are made to feel that through it his redemption may ultimately come; but at present it is entirely selfish, and thrives by the side of a callous indifference to the suffering and the starvation of his thralls. There is nothing exaggerated, nothing even unusual in the character, yet its contrast is vivid enough with the sublime figure of Godiva, whose newly-awakened love for her lord has awakened also all the finer possibilities of her being. It is inseparable from her joy in the beauty of nature—'Sad is the day, and worse must follow, when we hear the blackbird in the garden and do not throb with joy'—it quickens, instead of stifling her sympathy with the poorest of her subjects, and inspires her to an act of self-sacrifice in which she stakes more than life itself.

It is indeed to be noted that the closer the sympathy between the characters presented, the subtler is Landor's presentation of them and the more delicate his psychological insight. So it is in the scene already referred to between Lady Lisle and Elizabeth Gaunt, so in that magnificent colloquy upon the battle-field between Marcellus, the dying Roman, and Hannibal, his Carthaginian conqueror. Their rival states are in a death-struggle for supremacy; yet the patriotism which has made them mortal enemies does not prevent

either from appreciating the nobility of the other. In Hannibal is finely delineated the conflict between exultation at his victory and admiration for the fallen Roman, for whom he shows an almost tender chivalry. 'Send a vessel off to Carthage. Say Hannibal is at the gates of Rome—Marcellus, who stood alone between us, fallen. Brave man! I would rejoice, and cannot. How awfully serene a countenance! And how glorious a form and stature! And what plain armour!' And in the few words of Marcellus those qualities shine out to which the Roman Republic owed its greatness and its glory—courage, simplicity, love of home, passionate pride in the city for which, even in its utter danger, he will not counsel submission.

If scenes like these are to yield up to us their full secret, they must be read not with the eye alone, but with an intensity of thought and feeling sufficient to call them up before our minds alive and moving as Landor saw them. Their high artistic concentration can only appeal to the reader whose imagination is awake to their central emotion, and is readily responsive to the subtle transitions of feeling through which the characters pass. They are classical, not only in their reserve and in their emphasis upon the heroic in character and situation, but also in a certain statuesque quality in their conception. Lessing, in his treatise on the Laocoon, has pointed out that 'the artist who aims at presenting one moment and one aspect of it, as does the sculptor or the painter, cannot be too careful that the moment and aspect chosen shall be in the highest degree pregnant in its meaning—that is, shall

yield the utmost range to the activities of the imagination'. Some might conceive that the moment to be chosen would be the climax. 'But', says Lessing, 'in the whole evolution of the passion there is no one stage which has less of this advantage than its highest. Beyond it there is nothing, and to present the last extremity to the eye is in effect to put fetters on the imagination, and by denying it all possibility of rising above the sensible impression presented by the artist, to throw its activities forcibly on the weaker images that lie below that impression.'

In the *Imaginary Conversations*, scenes as it were chosen from unwritten dramas, Landor's artistic instinct guides him to follow this principle. The moment that he delights in depicting is that one preceding the climax of the action, when some great resolution has been taken, but has yet to be fulfilled, as in the *Leofric and Godiva*, or when, as with Catharine of Russia, some great action long planned has at last been executed, and now that the climax is over, the character, as it were, recoils upon itself, and is revealed in all its complexity. He is at his greatest when some heroic soul is faced with death, and, freed at last from the trivialities that tended to obscure its true proportions, it stands out in clear outline, the light of eternity behind it. Landor does not present the death, but what might be called the emotional pose that precedes it. But in every case what he exhibits is some pause in the action, a moment when nothing is done, but much has to be endured. And in this moment of tragic suspense we feel, as it were by contrast, the passionate storm of life from which for an instant

the actors have emerged. The action is all about us, through our own lively sense of the immediate past or the immediate future; it is present with us in the cries of battle which die away into the distance as we listen to the last words of Marcellus to Hannibal, in the forebodings of Godiva when the people crowd about her as she enters the city on the eve of her sacrifice—'I hope they will not crowd about me so to-morrow.' But the scene before us has the impressive stillness of arrested movement, giving opportunity for that revelation of spirit which in the tumult of action would escape observation. It is the supreme function of Landor's art, like that of painting or of sculpture, to give

> To one brief moment caught from fleeting time
> The appropriate calm of blest Eternity.

The attainment of this effect depends no more upon the careful choice of the scene to be presented than upon the manner of its presentation. Landor never gives a full statement, he never exhausts his emotion; he leaves much to be overheard by sensitive ears, relying throughout upon his elaborate and studied use of literary irony. Of irony, in the popular sense of the word, Landor was a master, and his satire is most effective, either when it is Socratic, or when he puts into the mouth of his characters words which, unconsciously to them, reveal to us their own weaknesses. But literary irony is put to higher purpose than satire. It is based not so much on the different construction put upon words by their speaker and by their audience, as upon the general inadequacy of words altogether to express what we

wish them to convey. Like all successful devices of art, it has its foundation in nature and the experience of life. Every man knows that when he feels most acutely he says the least, and that little not always to the point, and also that in moments of great stress, in crises of action or of feeling, conversation is definitely pitched in a low key. The artist realizes it, and conscious that however masterly his command of language, it yet fails before the infinite possibilities of the human spirit, he definitely refuses, at times, to get as near as he can to expression, and has recourse to deliberate understatement. By pointed omission, or by reference to some triviality that seems to call us away from the central passion that is throbbing in us, he rouses our sense of inadequacy or incongruity, thus concentrating us all the more poignantly upon the reality.

Even the great romantic artists, whose aim for the most part is the height of expression, fall back, in the last resource, upon the ironic method. Telling strokes of it are to be found in Othello's last great utterance, perhaps the finest dramatic speech in literature, and the dying words of Webster's Duchess are wholly conceived in this manner:

> I pray thee, look thou give my little boy
> Some syrup for his cold, and let the girl
> Say her prayers, ere she sleep.

Much of Landor's art depends upon an irony of this kind, which he employs not merely for the climax, but as a continual and studied means to restrain any undue outburst of emotion. Thus it is in his conversation between Leonora di Este

and the Cardinal Panigarola. The hapless love of the poet Tasso and the Princess Leonora di Este, and Tasso's imprisonment by her tyrannical brother on the charge of madness is a story of sure appeal to Landor. The scene in which he has chosen to depict it is that where Leonora, on her deathbed, receives from her confessor the last tidings of her lover. In order to appreciate its delicacy, we must bear in mind that Tasso, spied upon even in prison, has not dared to speak to the priest of the passion that devours him, nor dare the priest convey from him a direct message, and the irony of the situation is that the priest professes rather to prepare Leonora for her death than to encourage or satisfy her hopeless love. So throughout he pretends to interpret the words of Tasso and Leonora in a very different sense from that which they really suggest.

Leonora. I am prepared to depart, for I have struggled (God knows) to surmount what is unsurmountable. . . . Pray, father, for my deliverance; pray also for poor Torquato's: do not separate us in your prayers. O! could he leave his prison as surely and as speedily as I shall mine! it would not be more thankfully. O! that bars of iron were as fragile as bars of clay! O! that princes were as merciful as Death! But tell him, tell Torquato —go again; entreat, persuade, command him, to forget me.

Panigarola. Alas! even the command, even the command from you and from above, might not avail perhaps. You smile, Madonna!

Leonora. I die happy.

The whole brief dialogue, wherein little is stated but everything is conveyed, reveals in the subtlest and most delicate art the tragedy of Tasso and Leonora. And we feel its beauty and its pathos

far more deeply than if every ounce of passion had been wrung from it by a consummate master of romance.

In the style of his *Imaginary Conversations* there is no attempt at dramatic realism. All the dramatis personae speak Landorian English, which is far different both in rhythm and structure from the language of ordinary conversation. Landor justifies this, as was his wont, by analogy with the practice of the greatest dramatic writers. 'No man in pain', he says, 'ever used the best part of the language used by Sophocles in his delineation of Philoctetes. We admit it, and willingly; and are at least as much illuded by it as by anything else we hear or see upon the stage. Poets and statuaries and painters give us an adorned imitation of the object, so skilfully treated that we receive it for a correct one. This is the only illusion that they aim at; this is the perfection of their arts.' Now, in verse dialogue most people are prepared to accept this as a recognized artistic convention. They do not call *Hamlet* unnatural, because in real life Hamlet would not have spoken in blank verse. They judge of the language by its adequacy to express the ideas and emotions of the speaker, and recognize that through the beauty of the words they are attuned to sympathy with his emotion. The music of Landor's prose, as different from ordinary speech as that of Shakespeare's verse, is employed by him for the same purpose. It has its own beauty, beauty of a kind that creates the atmosphere in which his scenes have been conceived. It is careless of what is falsely called realism. It is in 'the grand style', which arises in Landor's

prose, as in poetry, when a serious subject is treated 'with simplicity and severity'. For if the object of art be to give immortality to great human passion, if it is its function to make

Sorrow more beautiful than beauty's self,

it can best be achieved by some kind of idealization, and in a form which lowers that element that is painful and distressing in order to emphasize the hidden emotion of which the physical is often an imperfect manifestation. Few persons are beautiful when they weep, none when they cry, however noble the emotion that prompts their tears; and a realism that attempts to represent their emotion by drawing the actual physical expression is doomed to irretrievable failure. Art can depict satisfactorily by realistic methods the face of the child that cries for chocolate, only by idealization can it depict the face of the child that has lost its mother. The truth that art aims at is not in the external ugliness of the face in pain, whether physical or mental, but in the essential beauty or greatness of the emotion that sways it, and the imaginative sympathy with that emotion which it is able to arouse in us; and it is to awaken this and make us share it that the artist strives.

In that emotional prose which never overreaches itself, yet has a beauty of melody and rhythm comparable to great poetry, Landor is one of our supreme masters. Prose, he said, may be infinitely varied in modulation, it is an extension of metres, an amplification of harmonies, of which even the best and most varied of poetry admits but few; certainly his own prose has

a more varied and a subtler cadence than his verse. But this does not imply either that he indulged in extraneous ornament, or that he neglected the intellectual in seeking for musical effect. The first duty of a writer, he tells us, is to be clear and concise. Obscurity is the worst fault in writing—worse to him than a flaw in the grammar, 'for we may discover a truth through such a defect which we cannot through an obscurity.' And when he is obscure himself, it is because of transitions too abrupt, through over conciseness—never through a lack of clearness in his own mind. Next to lucidity, he delighted in fullness of sound and sense. It has often been thought that his vocabulary is too much Latinized, but though he loved Latin words for their sonority he used none that had not been fully Anglicized. In diction he is always conservative, and speaks his word against slang or slovenly attempts at picturesqueness of phrase. His English is that of a scholar, but it is never pedantic, it remains essentially English in idiom and in lucidity. And the harmony of cadence that he gives it is not far-sought at the expense of the logical or intellectual elements in the style. It is the blending of proportion and force. 'Natural sequences and right subordination of thoughts and that just proportion of numbers in the sentences which follow a strong conception, are the constituents of a true harmony.' And again, 'Whatever is rightly said, sounds rightly.' His desire for a fullness of sense as well as sound makes him an intensely pictorial and imaginative writer. He often speaks in metaphor. But metaphor with him is not ornament, it is illumina-

tion. It arises inevitably from his artistic conception of his subject. 'Never look abroad for ornament' is his advice. 'Apollo, either as the god of day or the slayer of the Python, had nothing to obscure his clearness or impede his strength.' Many writers use simile and metaphor either because they do not see clearly or because they see double, because they cannot express their meaning in plain language and strive to hide their confusion of thought in a heap of glowing words. Landor is poetic in style when he sees a thing imaginatively, when his appeal is to the emotions as well as to the intellect.

Of the beauty of his cadence and modulation, its tender grace and restrained strength, examples will be found in passages that I have already quoted in this introduction, and in every page of the text. Whilst it rarely encroaches upon the sphere of verse-rhythm it is as delicate and its appeal is as sure. Always measured and serene, it rises with the emotion of the subject. What could be more lovely in cadence and phrasing than the words of Aesop to Rhodope? 'Laodameia died; Helen died; Leda, the beloved of Jupiter, went before. It is better to repose in the earth betimes than to sit up late; better, than to cling pertinaciously to what we feel crumbling under us, and to protract an inevitable fall. We may enjoy the present while we are insensible of infirmity and decay; but the present, like a note in music, is nothing but as it appertains to what is past and what is to come. There are no fields of amaranth on this side of the grave: there are no voices, O Rhodope, that are not soon mute, however tuneful: there is no name, with whatever

emphasis of passionate love repeated, of which the echo is not faint at last.'

And in simple lucid prose Landor could attain imaginative effects after which the more lyrical prose romanticists strove, often in vain, with an elaborate magnificence, or a strangeness of phrase and cadence approximating to the style of poetry. This is best exemplified in the three allegories, which are given in an appendix to this volume, for no selection from Landor's prose could be adequate without them. Allegory was a form of art which Landor held in no high esteem. It seemed to him a foggy way of presenting what ought to be presented clearly. He saw how most allegorists either think too much of their meaning and spoil their artistic picture, or think too much of their picture and put in details that are irrelevant to their meaning. But these short fables of Landor's are among the few perfect allegories in the language, each of them artistically beautiful, and yet with every detail of the presentation adding force and vividness to the truth he would present.

The limitations of Landor's art will be obvious enough, and I have already touched upon them. He exacts a heavy tax from his readers, assuming that they will bring to their reading a greater knowledge of his dramatis personae and their circumstances than can fairly be expected, whilst the very clearness with which he saw them imaged in his own mind, in their movements and gestures, and in the expression on their countenances, often prevented him from leaving a sufficient clue by which we can follow his drift. At his best he demands much concentration from us; and when

he is not at his best he lacks the supreme Hellenic quality of clarity. It is true of him, as of all great writers, that we must read him many times before his full meaning reaches us; it is true also, that for even an attentive mind the first reading is not so fruitful as it should be. And his style and method, suited as it is to present the heroic, the tender, and the pathetic—for all indeed that moves upon clear and simple lines, is unfitted to present the more complex and the evanescent. An uncontrollable passion, a rapid interchange of emotion, are as much outside his scope as are all the lighter forms of comedy. His art could have fashioned a Desdemona but not an Othello, a Lady Macbeth but not a Cleopatra, a Perdita or Miranda but not a Beatrice or a Rosalind. His style, always graceful and dignified, often majestic, often tender, is not flexible, and when it trespasses beyond its proper sphere it easily becomes stiff and ponderous. And those who are not willing to follow him to the heights on which his mind and passions move, will find even in his noblest writing something strained and remote. Yet perhaps for this very reason he is more precious to his little clan. After all, he never wished for a large public. 'I neither am,' he said, 'nor shall ever be popular. Such was never my ambition. But one thing is quite certain. I shall have as many readers as I desire to have in other times than ours. I shall dine late; but the dining-room will be well lighted, the guests few and select.' And he thought of his own fame no less than of the ordering of his life when he placed into the mouth of Dante these significant words: 'Let us love

those that love us, and be contented to teach those that will hear us. Neither the voice nor the affections can extend beyond a contracted circle.'

E. DE SÉLINCOURT.

GRASMERE, *July* 1914.

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IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

AESOP AND RHODOPE

Aesop. Albeit thou approachest me without any sign of derision, let me tell thee before thou advancest a step nearer, that I deem thee more hard-hearted than the most petulant of those other young persons, who are pointing and sneering from the doorway.

Rhodope. Let them continue to point and sneer at me: they are happy; so am I; but are you? Think me hard-hearted, O good Phrygian! but graciously give me the reason for thinking it; otherwise I may be unable to correct a fault too long overlooked by me, or to deprecate a grave infliction of the gods.

Aesop. I thought thee so, my little maiden, because thou camest toward me without the least manifestation of curiosity.

Rhodope. Is the absence of curiosity a defect?

Aesop. None whatever.

Rhodope. Are we blamable in concealing it if we have it?

Aesop. Surely not. But it is feminine; and where none of it comes forward, we may suspect that other feminine appurtenances, such as sympathy for example, are deficient. Curiosity slips in among you before the passions are awake; curiosity comforts your earliest cries; curiosity intercepts your latest. For which reason Daedalus,

who not only sculptured but painted admirably, represents her in the vestibule of the Cretan labyrinth as a goddess.

Rhodope. What was she like ?

Aesop. There now ? Like ? Why like Rhodope.

Rhodope. You said I have nothing of the kind.

Aesop. I soon discovered my mistake in this, and more than this, and not altogether to thy disadvantage.

Rhodope. I am glad to hear it.

Aesop. Art thou ? I will tell thee then how she was depicted : for I remember no author who has related it. Her lips were half-open ; her hair flew loosely behind her, designating that she was in haste ; it was more disordered, and it was darker, than the hair of Hope is represented, and somewhat less glossy. Her cheeks had a very fresh colour, and her eyes looked into every eye that fell upon them ; by her motion she seemed to be on her way into the labyrinth.

Rhodope. Oh, how I wish I could see such a picture !

Aesop. I do now.

Rhodope. Where ? where ? Troublesome man ! Are you always so mischievous ? but your smile is not ill-natured. I cannot help thinking that the smiles of men are pleasanter and sweeter than of women ; unless of the women who are rather old and decrepit, who seem to want help, and who perhaps are thinking that we girls are now the very images of what *they* were formerly. But girls never look at me so charmingly as you do, nor smile with such benignity ; and yet, O Phrygian ! there are several of them who really are much handsomer.

Aesop. Indeed ? Is that so clear ?

Rhodope. Perhaps in the sight of the gods they may not be, who see all things as they are. But some of them appear to me to be very beautiful.

Aesop. Which are those ?

Rhodope. The very girls who think me the ugliest of them all. How strange !

Aesop. That they should think thee so ?

Rhodope. No, no : but that nearly all the most beautiful should be of this opinion ; and the others should often come to look at me, apparently with delight, over each other's shoulder or under each other's arm, clinging to their girdle or holding by their sleeve, and hanging a little back, as if there were something about me unsafe. They seem fearful regarding me ; for here are many venomous things in this country, of which we have none at home.

Aesop. And some which we find all over the world. But thou art too talkative.

Rhodope. Now indeed you correct me with great justice, and with great gentleness. I know not why I am so pleased to talk with you. But what you say to me is different from what others say : the thoughts, the words, the voice, the look, all different. And yet reproof is but little pleasant, especially to those who are unused to it.

Aesop. Why didst thou not spring forward and stare at me, having heard as the rest had done, that I am unwillingly a slave, and indeed not over-willingly a deformed one ?

Rhodope. I would rather that neither of these misfortunes had befallen you.

Aesop. And yet within the year thou wilt rejoice that they have.

Rhodope. If you truly thought so, you would not continue to look at me with such serenity. Tell me why you say it.

Aesop. Because by that time thou wilt prefer me to the handsomest slave about the house.

Rhodope. For shame! vain creature!

Aesop. By the provision of the gods, the undersized and distorted are usually so. The cork of vanity buoys up their chins above all swimmers on the tide of life. But, Rhodope, my vanity has not yet begun.

Rhodope. How do you know that my name is Rhodope?

Aesop. Were I malicious I would inform thee, and turn against thee the tables on the score of vanity.

Rhodope. What can you mean?

Aesop. I mean to render thee happy in life, and glorious long after. Thou shalt be sought by the powerful, thou shalt be celebrated by the witty, and thou shalt be beloved by the generous and the wise. Xanthus may adorn the sacrifice, but the Immortal shall receive it from the altar.

Rhodope. I am but fourteen years old, and Xanthus is married. Surely he would not rather love me than one to whose habits and endearments he has been accustomed for twenty years.

Aesop. It seems wonderful: but such things do happen.

Rhodope. Not among us Thracians. I have seen in my childhood men older than Xanthus, who, against all remonstrances and many struggles, have fondled and kissed, before near relatives, wives of the same age, proud of exhibiting the honourable love they bore toward them: yet, in

the very next room, the very same day, scarcely would they press to their bosoms while you could (rather slowly) count twenty, nor kiss for half the time, beautiful young maidens, who, casting down their eyes, never stirred, and only said, '*Don't! Don't!*'

Aesop. What a rigid morality is the Thracian! How courageous the elderly! and how enduring the youthful!

Rhodope. Here in Egypt we are nearer to strange creatures; to men without heads, to others who ride on dragons.

Aesop. Stop there, little Rhodope! In all countries we live among strange creatures. However, there are none such in the world as thou hast been told of since thou camest hither.

Rhodope. Oh yes there are. You must not begin by shaking my belief, and by making me know less than others of my age. They all talk of them: nay, some creatures not by any means prettier, are worshipped here as deities: I have seen them with my own eyes. I wonder that you above all others should deny the existence of prodigies.

Aesop. Why dost thou wonder at it particularly in me?

Rhodope. Because when you were brought hither yesterday, and when several of my fellow-maidens came around you, questioning you about the manners and customs of your country, you began to tell them stories of beasts who spoke, and spoke reasonably.

Aesop. They are almost the only people of my acquaintance who do.

Rhodope. And you call them by the name of *people?*

Aesop. For want of a nobler and a better. Didst thou hear related what I had been saying ?

Rhodope. Yes, every word, and perhaps more.

Aesop. Certainly more ; for my audience was of females. But canst thou repeat any portion of the narrative ?

Rhodope. They began by asking you whether all the men in Phrygia were like yourself.

Aesop. Art thou quite certain that this was the real expression they used ? Come : no blushes. Do not turn round.

Rhodope. It had entirely that meaning.

Aesop. Did they not inquire if all Phrygians were such horrible monsters as the one before them ?

Rhodope. Oh heaven and earth ! this man is surely omniscient. Kind guest ! do not hurt them for it. Deign to repeat to me, if it is not too troublesome, what you said about the talking beasts.

Aesop. The innocent girls asked me many questions, or rather half-questions ; for never was one finished before another from the same or from a different quarter was begun.

Rhodope. This is uncivil : I would never have interrupted you.

Aesop. Pray tell me why all that courtesy.

Rhodope. For fear of losing a little of what you were about to say, or of receiving it somewhat changed. We never say the same thing in the same manner when we have been interrupted. Beside, there are many who are displeased at it ; and if you had been, it would have shamed and vexed me.

Aesop. Art thou vexed so easily ?

Rhodope. When I am ashamed I am. I shall be jealous if you are kinder to the others than to me, and if you refuse to tell me the story you told them yesterday.

Aesop. I have never yet made any one jealous; and I will not begin to try my talent on little Rhodope.

They asked me who governs Phrygia at present. I replied that the Phrygians had just placed themselves under the dominion of a sleek and quiet animal, half-fox, half-ass, named Alopiconos. At one time he seems fox almost entirely; at another, almost entirely ass.

Rhodope. And can he speak?

Aesop. Few better.

Rhodope. Are the Phrygians contented with him?

Aesop. They who raised him to power and authority rub their hands rapturously: nevertheless, I have heard several of the principal ones, in the very act of doing it, breathe out from closed teeth, '*The cursed fox!*' and others, '*The cursed ass!*'

Rhodope. What has he done?

Aesop. He has made the nation the happiest in the world, they tell us.

Rhodope. How?

Aesop. By imposing a heavy tax on the necessaries of life, and making it quite independent.

Rhodope. Oh Aesop! I am ignorant of politics, as of everything else We Thracians are near Phrygia: our kings, I believe, have not conquered it: what others have?

Aesop. None: but the independence which Alopiconos has conferred upon it, is conferred by

hindering the corn of other lands, more fertile and less populous, from entering it, until so many of the inhabitants have died of famine and disease, that there will be imported just enough for the remainder.

Rhodope. Holy Jupiter! protect my country! and keep for ever its asses and its foxes wider apart!

Tell me more. You know many things that have happened in the world. Beside the strange choice you just related, what is the most memorable thing that has occurred in Phrygia since the Trojan war?

Aesop. An event more memorable preceded it: but nothing since will appear to thee so extraordinary.

Rhodope. Then tell me only that.

Aesop. It will interest thee less, but the effect is more durable than of the other. Soon after the dethronement of Saturn, with certain preliminary ceremonies, by his eldest son Jupiter, who thus became the legitimate king of gods and men, the lower parts of nature on our earth were also much affected. At this season the water in all the rivers of Phrygia was running low, but quietly, so that the bottom was visible in many places, and grew tepid and warm and even hot in some. At last it became agitated and excited: and loud bubbles rose up from it, audible to the ears of Jupiter, declaring that it had an indefeasible right to exercise its voice on all occasions, and of rising to the surface at all seasons. Jupiter, who was ever much given to hilarity, laughed at this: but the louder he laughed, the louder bubbled the mud, beseeching him to thunder and lighten and

rain in torrents, and to sweep away dams and dykes and mills and bridges and roads, and moreover all houses in all parts of the country that were not built of mud. Thunder rolled in every quarter of the heavens: the lions and panthers were frightened, and growled horribly: the foxes, who are seldom at fault, began to fear for the farm-yards: and were seen with vertical tails, three of which, if put together, would be little stouter than a child's whip for whipping-tops, so thoroughly soaked were they and draggled in the mire: not an animal in the forest could lick itself dry: their tongues ached with attempting it. But the mud gained its cause, and rose above the river-sides. At first it was elated by success; but it had floated in its extravagance no long time before a panic seized it, at hearing out of the clouds the fatal word *teleutaion*, which signifies *final*. It panted and breathed hard; and, at the moment of exhausting the last remnant of its strength, again it prayed to Jupiter, in a formulary of words which certain borderers of the principal stream suggested, imploring him that it might stop and subside. It did so. The borderers enriched their fields with it, carting it off, tossing it about, and breaking it into powder. But the streams were too dirty for decent men to bathe in them; and scarcely a fountain in all Phrygia had as much pure water, at its very source, as thou couldst carry on thy head in an earthen jar. For several years afterward there were pestilential exhalations, and drought and scarcity, throughout the country.

Rhodope. This is indeed a memorable event; and yet I never heard of it before.

Aesop. Dost thou like my histories ?

Rhodope. Very much indeed.

Aesop. Both of them ?

Rhodope. Equally.

Aesop. Then, Rhodope, thou art worthier of instruction than any one I know. I never found an auditor, until the present, who approved of each ; one or other of the two was sure to be defective in style or ingenuity : it showed an ignorance of the times or of mankind : it proved only that the narrator was a person of contracted views, and that nothing pleased him.

Rhodope. How could you have hindered, with as many hands as Gyas, and twenty thongs in each, the fox and ass from uniting ? or how could you prevail on Jupiter to keep the mud from bubbling ? I have prayed to him for many things more reasonable, and he has never done a single one of them ; except the last perhaps.

Aesop. What was it ?

Rhodope. That he would bestow on me power and understanding to comfort the poor slave from Phrygia.

Aesop. On what art thou reflecting ?

Rhodope. I do not know. Is reflection that which will not lie quiet on the mind, and which makes us ask ourselves questions we cannot answer ?

Aesop. Wisdom is but that shadow which we call reflection ; dark always, more or less, but usually the most so where there is the most light around it.

Rhodope. I think I begin to comprehend you ; but beware lest any one else should. Men will hate you for it, and may hurt you ; for they will never bear the wax to be melted in the ear, as your words possess the faculty of doing.

Aesop. They may hurt me, but I shall have rendered them a service first.

Rhodope. Oh Aesop! if you think so, you must soon begin to instruct me how I may assist you, first in performing the service, and then in averting the danger: for I think you will be less liable to harm if I am with you.

Aesop. Proud child!

Rhodope. Not yet; I may be then.

Aesop. We must converse about other subjects.

Rhodope. On what rather?

Aesop. I was accused by thee of attempting to unsettle thy belief in prodigies and portents.

Rhodope. Teach me what is right and proper in regard to them, and in regard to the gods of this country who send them.

Aesop. We will either let them alone, or worship them as our masters do. But thou mayest be quite sure, O Rhodope! that if there were any men without heads, or any who ride upon dragons, they also would have been worshipped as deities long ago.

Rhodope. Ay; now you talk reasonably: so they would: at least I think so; I mean only in this country. In Thrace we do not think so unworthily of the gods: we are too afraid of Cerberus for that.

Aesop. Speak lower; or thou wilt raise ill blood between him and Anubis. His three heads could hardly lap milk when Anubis with only one could crack the thickest bone.

Rhodope. Indeed! how proud you must be to have acquired such knowledge.

Aesop. It is the knowledge which men most value, as being the most profitable to them; but I possess little of it.

Rhodope. What then will you teach me ?

Aesop. I will teach thee, O Rhodope, how to hold Love by both wings, and how to make a constant companion of an ungrateful guest.

Rhodope. I think I am already able to manage so little a creature.

Aesop. He hath managed greater creatures than Rhodope.

Rhodope. They had no scissors to clip his pinions, and they did not slap him soon enough on the back of the hand. I have often wished to see him ; but I never have seen him yet.

Aesop. Nor anything like ?

Rhodope. I have touched his statue ; and once I stroked it down, all over ; very nearly. He seemed to smile at me the more for it, until I was ashamed. I was then a little girl : it was long ago : a year at least.

Aesop. Art thou sure it was such a long while since ?

Rhodope. How troublesome ! Yes ! I never told anybody but you : and I never would have told you, unless I had been certain that you would find it out by yourself, as you did what those false foolish girls said concerning you. I am sorry to call them by such names, for I am confident that on other things and persons they never speak maliciously or untruly.

Aesop. Not about thee ?

Rhodope. They think me ugly and conceited, because they do not look at me long enough to find out their mistake. I know I am not ugly, and I believe I am not conceited ; so I should be silly if I were offended, or thought ill of them in return. But do you yourself always speak the

truth, even when you know it? The story of the mud, I plainly see, is a mythos. Yet, after all, it is difficult to believe; and you have scarcely been able to persuade me, that the beasts in any country talk and reason, or ever did.

Aesop. Wherever they do, they do one thing more than men do.

Rhodope. You perplex me exceedingly: but I would not disquiet you at present with more questions. Let me pause and consider a little, if you please. I begin to suspect that, as Gods formerly did, you have been turning men into beasts, and beasts into men. But, Aesop, you should never say the thing that is untrue.

Aesop. We say and do and look no other all our lives.

Rhodope. Do we never know better?

Aesop. Yes; when we cease to please, and to wish it; when death is settling the features, and the cerements are ready to render them unchangeable.

Rhodope. Alas! alas!

Aesop. Breathe, Rhodope, breathe again those painless sighs: they belong to thy vernal season. May thy summer of life be calm, thy autumn calmer, and thy winter never come.

Rhodope. I must die then earlier.

Aesop. Laodameia died; Helen died; Leda, the beloved of Jupiter, went before. It is better to repose in the earth betimes than to sit up late; better, than to cling pertinaciously to what we feel crumbling under us, and to protract an inevitable fall. We may enjoy the present while we are insensible of infirmity and decay: but the present, like a note in music, is nothing but as it appertains to what is past and what is to come.

There are no fields of amaranth on this side of the grave: there are no voices, O Rhodope! that are not soon mute, however tuneful: there is no name, with whatever emphasis of passionate love repeated, of which the echo is not faint at last.

Rhodope. Oh Aesop! let me rest my head on yours: it throbs and pains me.

Aesop. What are these ideas to thee?

Rhodope. Sad, sorrowful.

Aesop. Harrows that break the soil, preparing it for wisdom. Many flowers must perish ere a grain of corn be ripened.

And now remove thy head: the cheek is cool enough after its little shower of tears.

Rhodope. How impatient you are of the least pressure!

Aesop. There is nothing so difficult to support imperturbably as the head of a lovely girl, except her grief. Again upon mine! forgetful one! Raise it, remove it, I say. Why wert thou reluctant? why wert thou disobedient? Nay, look not so. It is I (and thou shalt know it) who should look reproachfully.

Rhodope. Reproachfully? did I? I was only wishing you would love me better, that I might come and see you often.

Aesop. Come often and see me, if thou wilt; but expect no love from me.

Rhodope. Yet how gently and gracefully you have spoken and acted, all the time we have been together. You have rendered the most abstruse things intelligible, without once grasping my hand, or putting your fingers among my curls.

Aesop. I should have feared to encounter the displeasure of two persons, if I had.

Rhodope. And well you might. They would scourge you, and scold me.

Aesop. That is not the worst.

Rhodope. The stocks too, perhaps.

Aesop. All these are small matters to the slave.

Rhodope. If they befell you, I would tear my hair and my cheeks, and put my knees under your ankles. Of whom should you have been afraid ?

Aesop. Of Rhodope and of Aesop. Modesty in man, O Rhodope ! is perhaps the rarest and most difficult of virtues : but intolerable pain is the pursuer of its infringement. Then follow days without content, nights without sleep, throughout a stormy season, a season of impetuous deluge which no fertility succeeds.

Rhodope. My mother often told me to learn modesty, when I was at play among the boys.

Aesop. Modesty in girls is not an acquirement, but a gift of nature : and it costs as much trouble and pain in the possessor to eradicate, as the fullest and firmest lock of hair would do.

Rhodope. Never shall I be induced to believe that men at all value it in themselves, or much in us, although from idleness or from rancour they would take it away from us whenever they can.

Aesop. And very few of you are pertinacious : if you run after them, as you often do, it is not to get it back.

Rhodope. I would never run after any one, not even you : I would only ask you, again and again, to love me.

Aesop. Expect no love from me. I will impart to thee all my wisdom, such as it is ; but girls like our folly best. Thou shalt never get a particle of mine from me.

Rhodope. Is love foolish ?

Aesop. At thy age and at mine. I do not love thee : if I did, I would the more forbid thee ever to love *me*.

Rhodope. Strange man !

Aesop. Strange indeed. When a traveller is about to wander on a desert, it is strange to lead him away from it ; strange to point out to him the verdant path he should pursue, where the tamarisk and lentisk and acacia wave overhead, where the reseda is cool and tender to the foot that presses it, and where a thousand colours sparkle in the sunshine, on fountains incessantly gushing forth.

Rhodope. Xanthus has all these ; and I could be amid them in a moment.

Aesop. Why art not thou ?

Rhodope. I know not exactly. Another day perhaps. I am afraid of snakes this morning. Beside, I think it may be sultry out of doors. Does not the wind blow from Libya ?

Aesop. It blows as it did yesterday when I came over, fresh across the Aegean, and from Thrace. Thou mayest venture into the morning air.

Rhodope. No hours are so adapted to study as those of the morning. But will you teach me ? I shall so love you if you will.

Aesop. If thou wilt *not* love me, I will teach thee.

Rhodope. Unreasonable man !

Aesop. Art thou aware what those mischievous little hands are doing ?

Rhodope. They are tearing off the golden hem from the bottom of my robe ; but it is stiff and difficult to detach.

Aesop. Why tear it off ?

Rhodope. To buy your freedom. Do you spring up, and turn away, and cover your face from me?

Aesop. My freedom? Go, Rhodope! Rhodope! This, of all things, I shall never owe to thee.

Rhodope. Proud man! and you tell me to go! do you? do you? Answer me at least. Must I? and so soon?

Aesop. Child! begone!

Rhodope. Oh Aesop! you are already more my master than Xanthus is. I will run and tell him so: and I will implore of him, upon my knees, never to impose on *you* a command so hard to obey.

Second Conversation

Aesop. And so, our fellow slaves are given to contention on the score of dignity?

Rhodope. I do not believe they are much addicted to contention: for, whenever the good Xanthus hears a signal of such misbehaviour, he either brings a scourge into the midst of them, or sends our lady to scold them smartly for it.

Aesop. Admirable evidence against their propensity!

Rhodope. I will not have you find them out so, nor laugh at them.

Aesop. Seeing that the good Xanthus and our lady are equally fond of thee, and always visit thee both together, the girls, however envious, cannot well or safely be arrogant, but must of necessity yield the first place to thee.

Rhodope. They indeed are observant of the kindness thus bestowed upon me: yet they afflict me by taunting me continually with what I am unable to deny.

Aesop. If it is true, it ought little to trouble

thee ; if untrue, less. I know, for I have looked into nothing else of late, no evil can thy heart have admitted : a sigh of thine before the Gods would remove the heaviest that could fall on it. Pray tell me what it may be. Come, be courageous ; be cheerful. I can easily pardon a smile if thou empleadest me of curiosity.

Rhodope. They remark to me that enemies or robbers took them forcibly from their parents . . and that . . and that . . .

Aesop. Likely enough : what then ? Why desist from speaking ? why cover thy face with thy hair and hands ? Rhodope ! Rhodope ! dost thou weep moreover ?

Rhodope. It is so sure !

Aesop. Was the fault thine ?

Rhodope. O that it were . . if there was any.

Aesop. While it pains thee to tell it, keep thy silence : but when utterance is a solace, then impart it.

Rhodope. They remind me (oh ! who could have had the cruelty to relate it ?) that my father, my own dear father . . .

Aesop. Say not the rest : I know it : his day was come.

Rhodope. Sold me, sold me. You start : you did not at the lightning, last night, nor at the rolling sounds above. And do you, generous Aesop ! do you also call a misfortune a disgrace ?

Aesop. If it is, I am among the most disgraceful of men. Didst thou dearly love thy father ?

Rhodope. All loved him. He was very fond of me.

Aesop. And yet sold thee ! sold thee to a stranger !

Rhodope. He was the kindest of all kind fathers, nevertheless. Nine summers ago, you may have heard perhaps, there was a grievous famine in our land of Thrace.

Aesop. I remember it perfectly.

Rhodope. O poor Aesop! and were you too famishing in your native Phrygia?

Aesop. The calamity extended beyond the narrow sea that separates our countries. My appetite was sharpened: but the appetite and the wits are equally set on the same grindstone.

Rhodope. I was then scarcely five years old: my mother died the year before: my father sighed at every funereal, but he sighed more deeply at every bridal, song. He loved me because he loved her who bore me: and yet I made him sorrowful whether I cried or smiled. If ever I vexed him, it was because I would not play when he told me, but made him, by my weeping, weep again.

Aesop. And yet he could endure to lose thee! he, thy father! Could any other? could any who lives on the fruits of the earth, endure it? O age, that art incumbent over me! blessed be thou; thrice blessed! Not that thou stillest the tumults of the heart, and promisest eternal calm, but that, prevented by thy beneficence, I never shall experience this only intolerable wretchedness.

Rhodope. Alas! alas!

Aesop. Thou art now happy, and shouldst not utter that useless exclamation.

Rhodope. You said something angrily and vehemently when you stepped aside. Is it not enough that the handmaidens doubt the kindness of my father? Must so virtuous and so wise a man as Aesop blame him also?

Aesop. Perhaps he is little to be blamed; certainly he is much to be pitied.

Rhodope. Kind heart! on which mine must never rest.

Aesop. Rest on it for comfort and for counsel when they fail thee: rest on it, as the Deities on the breast of mortals, to console and purify it.

Rhodope. Could I remove any sorrow from it, I should be contented.

Aesop. Then be so; and proceed in thy narrative.

Rhodope. Bear with me a little yet. My thoughts have overpowered my words, and now themselves are overpowered and scattered.

Forty-seven days ago (this is only the forty-eighth since I beheld you first) I was a child: I was ignorant, I was careless.

Aesop. If these qualities are signs of childhood, the universe is a nursery.

Rhodope. Affliction, which makes many wiser, had no such effect on me. But reverence and love (why should I hesitate at the one avowal more than at the other?) came over me, to ripen my understanding.

Aesop. O Rhodope! we must loiter no longer upon this discourse.

Rhodope. Why not?

Aesop. Pleasant is yonder beanfield, seen over the high papyrus when it waves and bends: deep-laden with the sweet heaviness of its odour is the listless air that palpitates dizzily above it: but Death is lurking for the slumberer beneath its blossoms.

Rhodope. You must not love then! . . but may not I?

Aesop. We will . . but . . .

Rhodope. *We!* O sound that is to vibrate on my breast for ever! O hour! happier than all other hours since time began! O gracious Gods! who brought me into bondage!

Aesop. Be calm, be composed, be circumspect. We must hide our treasure that we may not lose it.

Rhodope. I do not think that you can love me; and I fear and tremble to hope so. Ah, yes; you have said you did. But again you only look at me, and sigh as if you repented.

Aesop. Unworthy as I may be of thy fond regard, I am not unworthy of thy fullest confidence: why distrust me?

Rhodope. Never will I . . . never, never. To know that I possess your love, surpasses all other knowledge, dear as is all that I receive from you. I should be tired of my own voice if I heard it on aught beside: and even yours is less melodious in any other sound than *Rhodope.*

Aesop. Do such little girls learn to flatter?

Rhodope. Teach me how to speak, since you could not teach me how to be silent.

Aesop. Speak no longer of me, but of thyself; and only of things that never pain thee.

Rhodope. Nothing can pain me now.

Aesop. Relate thy story then, from infancy.

Rhodope. I must hold your hand: I am afraid of losing you again.

Aesop. Now begin. Why silent so long?

Rhodope. I have dropped all memory of what is told by me and what is untold.

Aesop. Recollect a little. I can be patient with this hand in mine.

Rhodope. I am not certain that yours is any help to recollection.

Aesop. Shall I remove it?

Rhodope. O! now I think I can recall the whole story. What did you say? did you ask any question?

Aesop. None, excepting what thou hast answered.

Rhodope. Never shall I forget the morning when my father, sitting in the coolest part of the house, exchanged his last measure of grain for a chlamys of scarlet cloth fringed with silver. He watched the merchant out of the door, and then looked wistfully into the corn-chest. I, who thought there was something worth seeing, looked in also, and, finding it empty, expressed my disappointment, not thinking however about the corn. A faint and transient smile came over his countenance at the sight of mine. He unfolded the chlamys, stretched it out with both hands before me, and then cast it over my shoulders. I looked down on the glittering fringe and screamed with joy. He then went out; and I know not what flowers he gathered, but he gathered many; and some he placed in my bosom, and some in my hair. But I told him with captious pride, first that I could arrange them better, and again that I would have only the white. However, when he had selected all the white, and I had placed a few of them according to my fancy, I told him (rising in my slipper) he might crown me with the remainder. The splendour of my apparel gave me a sensation of authority. Soon as the flowers had taken their station on my head, I expressed a dignified satisfaction at the taste displayed by my father, just as if I could have seen how they appeared! But he knew that

there was at least as much pleasure as pride in it, and perhaps we divided the latter (alas! not both) pretty equally. He now took me into the market-place, where a concourse of people was waiting for the purchase of slaves. Merchants came and looked at me; some commending, others disparaging; but all agreeing that I was slender and delicate, that I could not live long, and that I should give much trouble. Many would have bought the chlamys, but there was something less saleable in the child and flowers.

Aesop. Had thy features been coarse and thy voice rustic, they would all have patted thy cheeks and found no fault in thee.

Rhodope. As it was, every one had bought exactly such another in time past, and been a loser by it. At these speeches I perceived the flowers tremble slightly on my bosom, from my father's agitation. Although he scoffed at them, knowing my healthiness, he was troubled internally, and said many short prayers, not very unlike imprecations, turning his head aside. Proud was I, prouder than ever, when at last several talents were offered for me, and by the very man who in the beginning had undervalued me the most, and prophesied the worst of me. My father scowled at him, and refused the money. I thought he was playing a game, and began to wonder what it could be, since I never had seen it played before. Then I fancied it might be some celebration because plenty had returned to the city, insomuch that my father had bartered the last of the corn he hoarded. I grew more and more delighted at the sport. But soon there advanced an elderly man, who said gravely,

'Thou hast stolen this child: her vesture alone is worth above a hundred drachmas. Carry her home again to her parents, and do it directly, or Nemesis and the Eumenides will overtake thee.' Knowing the estimation in which my father had always been holden by his fellow citizens, I laughed again, and pinched his ear. He, although naturally choleric, burst forth into no resentment at these reproaches, but said calmly, 'I think I know thee by name, O guest! Surely thou art Xanthus the Samian. Deliver this child from famine.'

Again I laughed aloud and heartily; and, thinking it was now my part of the game, I held out both my arms and protruded my whole body toward the stranger. He would not receive me from my father's neck, but he asked me with benignity and solicitude if I was hungry: at which I laughed again, and more than ever: for it was early in the morning, soon after the first meal, and my father had nourished me most carefully and plentifully in all the days of the famine. But Xanthus, waiting for no answer, took out of a sack, which one of his slaves carried at his side, a cake of wheaten bread and a piece of honey-comb, and gave them to me. I held the honey-comb to my father's mouth, thinking it the most of a dainty. He dashed it to the ground; but, seizing the bread, he began to devour it ferociously. This also I thought was in play; and I clapped my hands at his distortions. But Xanthus looked on him like one afraid, and smote the cake from him, crying aloud, 'Name the price.' My father now placed me in his arms, naming a price much below what the other had offered, saying, 'The Gods are ever with

thee, O Xanthus! therefore to thee do I consign my child.' But while Xanthus was counting out the silver, my father seized the cake again, which the slave had taken up and was about to replace in the wallet. His hunger was exasperated by the taste and the delay. Suddenly there arose much tumult. Turning round in the old woman's bosom who had received me from Xanthus, I saw my beloved father struggling on the ground, livid and speechless. The more violent my cries, the more rapidly they hurried me away; and many were soon between us. Little was I suspicious that he had suffered the pangs of famine long before: alas! and he had suffered them for me. Do I weep while I am telling you they ended? I could not have closed his eyes; I was too young; but I might have received his last breath; the only comfort of an orphan's bosom. Do you now think him blameable, O Aesop?

Aesop. It was sublime humanity: it was forbearance and self-denial which even the immortal gods have never shown us. He could endure to perish by those torments which alone are both acute and slow: he could number the steps of death and miss not one: but he could never see thy tears, nor let thee see his. O weakness above all fortitude! Glory to the man who rather bears a grief corroding his breast, than permits it to prowl beyond, and to prey on the tender and compassionate. Women commiserate the brave, and men the beautiful. The dominion of Pity has usually this extent, no wider. Thy father was exposed to the obloquy not only of the malicious, but also of the ignorant and thoughtless, who condemn in the unfortunate what they applaud

in the prosperous. There is no shame in poverty or in slavery, if we neither make ourselves poor by our improvidence nor slaves by our venality. The lowest and highest of the human race are sold: most of the intermediate are also slaves, but slaves who bring no money in the market.

Rhodope. Surely the great and powerful are never to be purchased: are they?

Aesop. It may be a defect in my vision, but I cannot see greatness on the earth. What they tell me is great and aspiring, to me seems little and crawling. Let me meet thy question with another. What monarch gives his daughter for nothing? Either he receives stone walls and unwilling cities in return, or he barters her for a parcel of spears and horses and horsemen, waving away from his declining and helpless age young joyous life, and trampling down the freshest and the sweetest memories. Midas in the height of prosperity would have given his daughter to Lycaon, rather than to the gentlest, the most virtuous, the most intelligent of his subjects. Thy father threw wealth aside, and, placing thee under the protection of Virtue, rose up from the house of Famine to partake in the festivals of the gods.

Release my neck, O Rhodope! for I have other questions to ask of thee about him.

Rhodope. To hear thee converse on him in such a manner, I can do even that.

Aesop. Before the day of separation was he never sorrowful? did he never by tears or silence reveal the secret of his soul?

Rhodope. I was too infantine to perceive or imagine his intention. The night before I became the slave of Xanthus, he sat on the edge of

my bed. I pretended to be asleep: he moved away silently and softly. I saw him collect in the hollow of his hand the crumbs I had wasted on the floor, and then eat them, and then look if any were remaining. I thought he did so out of fondness for me, remembering that, even before the famine, he had often swept up off the table the bread I had broken, and had made me put it between his lips. I would not dissemble very long, but said:

'Come, now you have wakened me, you must sing me asleep again, as you did when I was little.'

He smiled faintly at this, and, after some delay, when he had walked up and down the chamber, thus began:

'I will sing to thee one song more, my wakeful Rhodope! my chirping bird! over whom is no mother's wing! That it may lull thee asleep, I will celebrate no longer, as in the days of wine and plenteousness, the glory of Mars, guiding in their invisibly rapid onset the dappled steeds of Rhaesus. What hast thou to do, my little one, with arrows tired of clustering in the quiver? How much quieter is thy pallet than the tents which whitened the plain of Simöis! What knowest thou about the river Eurotas? What knowest thou about its ancient palace, once trodden by assembled Gods, and then polluted by the Phrygian? What knowest thou of perfidious men or of sanguinary deeds?

'Pardon me, O goddess who presidest in Cythera! I am not irreverent to thee, but ever grateful. May she upon whose brow I lay my hand, praise and bless thee for evermore!

'Ah yes! continue to hold up above the coverlet those fresh and rosy palms claspt together: her

benefits have descended on thy beauteous head, my child! The Fates also have sung, beyond thy hearing, of pleasanter scenes than snow-fed Hebrus; of more than dim grottos and sky-bright waters. Even now a low murmur swells upward to my ear: and not from the spindle comes the sound, but from those who sing slowly over it, bending all three their tremulous heads together. I wish thou couldst hear it; for seldom are their voices so sweet. Thy pillow intercepts the song perhaps: lie down again, lie down, my Rhodope! I will repeat what they are saying:

'"Happier shalt thou be, nor less glorious, than even she, the truly beloved, for whose return to the distaff and the lyre the portals of Taenarus flew open. In the woody dells of Ismarus, and when she bathed among the swans of Strymon, the Nymphs called her Eurydice. Thou shalt behold that fairest and that fondest one hereafter. But first thou must go unto the land of the lotos, where famine never cometh, and where alone the works of man are immortal."

'O my child! the undeceiving Fates have uttered this. Other Powers have visited me, and have strengthened my heart with dreams and visions. We shall meet again, my Rhodope! in shady groves and verdant meadows, and we shall sit by the side of those who loved us.'

He was rising: I threw my arms about his neck, and, before I would let him go, I made him promise to place me, not by the side, but between them: for I thought of her who had left us. At that time there were but two, O Aesop.

You ponder: you are about to reprove my assurance in having thus repeated my own praises.

I would have omitted some of the words, only that it might have disturbed the measure and cadences, and have put me out. They are the very words my dearest father sang; and they are the last: yet shame upon me! the nurse (the same who stood listening near, who attended me into this country) could remember them more perfectly: it is from her I have learnt them since: she often sings them, even by herself.

Aesop. So shall others. There is much both in them and in thee to render them memorable.

Rhodope. Who flatters now?

Aesop. Flattery often runs beyond Truth, in a hurry to embrace her; but not here. The dullest of mortals, seeing and hearing thee, could never misinterpret the prophecy of the Fates.

If, turning back, I could overpass the vale of years, and could stand on the mountain-top, and could look again far before me at the bright ascending morn, we would enjoy the prospect together; we would walk along the summit hand in hand, O Rhodope, and we would only sigh at last when we found ourselves below with others.

XERXES AND ARTABANUS

Artabanus. Many nations, O Xerxes, have risen higher in power, but no nation rose ever to the same elevation in glory as the Greek.

Xerxes. For which reason, were there no other, I would destroy it; then all the glory this troublesome people have acquired will fall unto me in addition to my own.

Artabanus. The territory, yes; the glory, no. The solid earth may yield to the mighty: one particle of glory is never to be detached from the acquirer and possessor.

Xerxes. Artabanus! Artabanus! thou speakest more like an Athenian than a Persian. If thou forgettest thy country, remember at least thy race.

Artabanus. I owe duty and obedience to my King; I owe truth both to King and country. Years have brought me experience.

Xerxes. And timidity.

Artabanus. Yes, before God.

Xerxes. And not before the monarch?

Artabanus. My last word said it.

Xerxes. I too am pious; yea, even more devout than thou. Was there ever such a sacrifice as that of the thousand beeves, which on the Mount of Ilion I offered up in supplication to Athenè? I think it impossible the gods of Hellas should refuse me victory over such outcasts and barbarians in return for a thousand head of cattle. Never was above a tenth of the number offered up to them before. Indeed, I doubt whether a tenth of that tenth come not nearer to the amount: for the Greeks are great boasters, and, in their exceeding cleverness and roguery, would chuckle at cheating the eagerly expectant and closely observant gods. What sayest thou?

Artabanus. About the Greeks I can say nothing to the contrary: but about the gods a question is open. Are they more vigorous, active, and vigilant for the thousand beeves? Certain it is that every Mede and Persian in the army would have improved in condition after feasting on them: as they might all have done for many days.

Xerxes. But their feasting or fasting could have no influence on the gods, who, according to their humour at the hour, might either laugh or scowl at them.

Artabanus. I know not the will of Him above; for there is only one; as our fathers and those before them have taught us. Ignorant Greeks, when they see the chariot of his representative drawn before thee by white horses, call him Zeus.

Xerxes. Mithra, the sun, we venerate.

Artabanus. Mithra we call the object of our worship. One sits above the sun, observes it, watches it, and replenishes it perpetually with his own light to guide the walk of the seasons. He gives the sun its beauty, its strength, its animation.

Xerxes. I worship him devoutly. But if one God can do us good, fifty can do us more, aided by demigods and heroes.

Artabanus. Could fifty lamps in a royal chamber add light to it when open to the meridian?

Xerxes. No doubt they could.

Artabanus. Are they wanted?

Xerxes. Perhaps not. They must be, even there, if the sun should go behind a cloud.

Artabanus. God avert the omen!

Xerxes. I have better omens in abundance. I am confident, I am certain of success. The more powerful and the more noble of the Greeks, the Athenians, Spartans, Thessalians, are with me, or ready to join me.

Artabanus. How many of them, fugitives from their country, or traitors to it, can be trusted?

Xerxes. The Aleuadai from Larissa, country of Achilles, whose sepulchral mound we visited, offer me their submission and the strongholds on the

borders of their territory. The descendants of Pisistratus, with the King of Sparta, are under my protection, and obedient to my will. They who have been stripped of power, lawful or unlawful, are always the most implacable enemies of their country. Whether they return to it by force or by treachery, or by persuasion and the fickleness of the people, they rule with rigour. Ashamed of complicity and cowardice, the rabble, the soldiery, the priests, the nobles, hail them with acclamations, and wait only to raise louder, until his death, natural or violent (but violent and natural are here the same), shall deliver them again from their bondage. Then cometh my hand afresh over the people and draweth it gently back unto me. Resistance is vain. Have I not commanded the refractory and insolent sea to be scourged? and not for disobeying my orders, which it never dared, but in my absence for destroying my bridge. The sentence hath already been carried into execution. Never more in my proximity and to my detriment will it presume to be tumultuous and insurgent.

Artabanus. O King! thy power is awful, is irresistible; but can the waves feel? [1]

Xerxes. Mutineers can; and these waves were mutineers. They hiss and roar and foam, and swell and sink down again; and never are quiet. This, O Artabanus, is so like undisciplined men, that it appears to me they also may feel. Whether they do or not, terror is stricken into the hearts of the beholders. No exertion of superior power but works

[1] Dead men, it is said, have been whipped under the Czar Nicholas; but they were alive and hale when the whipping began.

upon the senses of mankind. Men are always the most obedient to, and follow the most vociferously, those who can and who do chastise, whether them or others. A trifle of benefit, bestowed on them afterward, drops like balm into the wound: but balm the most precious and the most sanitary drops insensibly on an unwounded part. Behold! here come into my presence, to be reviewed at my leisure, the silver shields. To what perfect discipline have I brought my army! Its armature is either the admiration or the terror of the universe. What sayest thou?

Artabanus. Certainly our Median and Persian cavalry is excellent. In regard to the armature, which former kings and generals devised, I entreat the liberty to remark, that its brightness and gorgeousness are better adapted to attract the fancies of women and boys, than to strike terror into martial men.

Xerxes. Look thou again, if thine eyes can endure the splendour, look thou again at my body-guard, and at their silver shields, and at their spears with golden pomegranates at the nearer end.

Artabanus. Permit me to inquire, of what utility are these golden pomegranates? They stick not into the ground, which sometimes is needful; they are injurious to the arm in grasping, more injurious in evolution, and may sometimes be handles for the enemy. Metal breastplates, metal corselets, metal shields, silver or brass, are unwieldy and wearisome, not only by the weight but by the heat, especially at that season of the year when armies are most in activity.

Xerxes. What wouldst thou have? What wouldst thou suggest?

Artabanus. I would have neither horse hair nor plumage, nor other ornament, on the helmet, which are inconvenient to the soldier, but are convenient to the enemy. Helmets, alike for cavalry and infantry, should in form be conical, or shaped as the keel of a ship. In either case, a stroke of the sword, descending on it, would more probably glance off, without inflicting a wound. But I would render them less heavy, and less subject to the influence of heat and cold.

Xerxes. Impossible! How?

Artabanus. There are materials. Cork, two fingers' breadth in thickness, covered with well-seasoned, strained, and levigated leather, would serve the purpose both for helmet and corselet, and often turn aside, often resist, both sword and spear.

Xerxes. My younger soldiers, especially the officers, would take little pride in such equipment.

Artabanus. The pride of the officer ought to be in the efficiency and comfort of the soldier. Latterly I have been grieved to see vain and idle young persons introduce alterations, which wiser men laugh at, and by which the enemy only, and their tailor, can profit. We should be more efficient if we were less decorative.

Xerxes. Efficient! what can excel us?

Artabanus. Ah, my King! Our ancestors have excelled *their* ancestors in various improvements and inventions: our children may excel *us*. Where is that beyond which there is nothing? Great would be our calamity, for great our disgrace and shame, if barbarians, in any action, however slight and partial, should discomfit the smallest

part of our armies. And there are barbarians whose bodies are more active, whose vigilance more incessant, whose abstinence more enduring, and whose armour is less impedimental, than ours. I blush at some of our bravest and best generals giving way so easily to fantastical and inexperienced idlers, who never saw a battle even from a balcony or a tower. Who is he that would not respect and venerate grey hairs? but, seeing such dereliction of dignity, such relaxation of duty, such unworthy subserviency, who can? Every soldier should be able to swim, and should have every facility for doing it. Corselets of the form I described, would enable whole bodies of troops to cross broad and deep rivers, and would save a great number of pontoons, and their carriages, and their bullocks. No shield would be necessary; so that every soldier, Mede and Persian, would have one hand the more out of two. Let the barbarous nations in our service use only their own weapons; it is inexpedient and dangerous to instruct them in better.

Xerxes. There is somewhat of wisdom, but not much, O Artabanus, in thy suggestions; had there been more, the notions would first have occurred to me. But with the arms which our men already bear we are perfectly a match for the Greeks, who, seeing our numbers, will fly.

Artabanus. Whither? From one enemy to another? Believe me, sir, neither Athenian nor Spartan will ever fly. If he loses this one battle, he loses life or freedom; and he knows it.

Xerxes. I would slay only the armed. The women and children I would in part divide among the bravest of my army, and in part I would settle

on the barren localities of my dominions, whereof there are many.

Artabanus. Humanely and royally spoken: but did it never once occur to an observer so sagacious, that thousands and tens of thousands, in your innumerable host, would gladly occupy and cultivate those desert places, in which an Athenian would pine away? Immense tracts of your dominions are scantily inhabited. Two million men are taken from agriculture and other works of industry, of whom probably a third would have married, another third would have had children born unto them from the wives they left behind: of these thousands and tens of thousands God only knows how many may return. Not only losses are certain; but wide fields must lie uncultivated, much cattle be the prey of wild beasts throughout the empire, and more of worse depredators, who never fear the law, but always the battle, and who skulk behind and hide themselves, to fall upon what unprotected property has been left by braver men. Unless our victory and our return be speedy, your providence in collecting stores, during three entire years, will have been vain. Already the greater part (four-fifths at the lowest computation) hath been consumed. Attica and Sparta could not supply a sufficiency for two millions of men additional, and three hundred thousand horses, two months. Provender will soon be wanting for the sustenance of their own few cattle: summer heats have commenced; autumn is distant, and unpromising.

Xerxes. Disaffection! disaffection! Artabanus, beware! I love my father's brother; but not even my father's brother shall breathe despondency

or disquietude into my breast. Well do I remember thy counsel against this expedition.

Artabanus. Thou thyself for a while, O King, and before I gave my counsel, didst doubt and hesitate.

Xerxes. The holy Dream enlightened me: and thou also wert forced to acknowledge the visitation of the same. Awful and superhuman was the Apparition. Never had I believed that even a Deity would threaten Xerxes. A second time, when I had begun again to doubt and hesitate, it appeared before me; the same stately figure, the same menacing attitude, nearer and nearer. Thou wilt acknowledge, O Artabanus, that in this guise, or one more terrible, he came likewise unto thee.

Artabanus. Commanded by my King to enter his chamber and to sleep in his bed, I did so. Discourse on the invasion of Greece had animated some at supper, and depressed others. Wine was poured freely into the cups equally of these and of those. Mardonius, educated by the wisest of the Mages, and beloved by all of them, was long in conference with his old preceptor. Toward the close they were there alone. Wearied, and fearful of offending, I retired, and left them together. The royal bedchamber had many tapers in various parts of it: by degrees they grew more and more dim, breathing forth such odours as royalty alone is privileged to inhale. Slumber came over me; heavy sleep succeeded.

Xerxes. It was thus with me, the first night and the second. Mardonius would never have persuaded me, had dreams and visions been less constant and less urgent. What pious man ought to resist

them? Nevertheless, I am still surrounded and trammelled by perplexities.

Artabanus. The powerful, the generous, the confiding, always are; kings especially.

Xerxes. Mardonius, I begin to suspect, is desirous of conquering Greece principally in order to become satrap of that country.

Artabanus. He is young; he may be and ought to be ambitious, but I believe him to be loyal.

Xerxes. Artabanus! thou art the only one about me who never spoke ill, or hinted it, of another.

Artabanus. I have never walked in the path of evil-doers, and know them not.

Xerxes. Fortunate am I that a man so wise and virtuous hath come over to my opinion. The Vision was irresistible.

Artabanus. It confirmed, not indeed my opinion, but the words formerly told me by a Mage now departed.

Xerxes. What words? Did he likewise foresee and foretell my conquest of Hellas?

Artabanus. I know not whether he foresaw it: certainly he never foretold it unto me. But wishing to impress on my tender mind (for I was then about the age of puberty) the power appertaining to the Mages, he declared to me, among other wonders, that the higher of them could induce sleep, of long continuance and profound, by a movement of the hand; could make the sleeper utter his inmost thoughts; could inspire joy or terror, love or hatred; could bring remote things and remote persons near, even the future, even the dead. Is it impossible that the Dream was one of them?

Xerxes. I am quite lost in the darkness of wonder; for never hast thou been known to utter an untruth, or a truth disparaging to the Mages. Their wisdom is unfathomable; their knowledge is unbounded by the visible world in which we live: their empire is vast even as mine. But take heed: who knows but the gods themselves are creatures of their hands! My hair raises up my diadem at the awful thought.

Artabanus. The just man, O Xerxes, walks humbly in the presence of his God, but walks fearlessly. Deities of many nations are within thy tents; and each of them is thought the most powerful, the only true one, by his worshipper. Some, it is reported, are jealous: if so, the worshipper is, or may be, better than they are. The courts and pavilions of others are represented by their hymners as filled with coals and smoke, and with chariots and instruments of slaughter. These are the Deities of secluded regions and gloomy imaginations. We are now amid a people of more lively and more genial faith.

Xerxes. I think their gods are easy to propitiate, and worth propitiating. The same singer who celebrated the valour of Achilles hath described in another poem the residence of these gods; where they lead quiet lives above the winds and tempests; where frost never binds the pure illimitable expanse; where snow never whirls around; where lightning never quivers; but temperate warmth and clearest light are evermore about them.

Such is the description which the sons of Hipparchus have translated for my amusement from the singer.

Artabanus. Whatever be the quarrels in the various tents, extending many and many parasangs in every direction, there is no quarrel or disturbance about the objects of veneration. Barbarous are many of the nations under thee, but none so barbarous. There may be such across the Danube and across the Adriatic; old regions of fable; countries where there are Laestrigons and Cyclopes, and men turned into swine; there may be amid the wastes of Scythia, where Gryphons are reported to guard day and night treasures of gold buried deep under the rocks, and to feed insatiably on human blood and marrow; but none, O happy King, within the regions, interminable as they are, under the beneficent sway of thy sceptre.

Xerxes. The huntsman knows how to treat dogs that quarrel in the kennel; moreover he perceives the first symptoms of the rabid, and his arrow is upon the string.

Ancient times and modern have seen annihilated two great armies; the greatest of each: that of Xerxes and that of Napoleon. Xerxes was neither the more ambitious of these invaders nor the more powerful, but greatly the more provident. Three years together he had been storing magazines in readiness for his expedition, and had collected fresh provisions in abundance on his march. Napoleon marched where none had been or could be collected, instead of taking the road by Dantzig, in which fortress were ample stores for his whole army until it should reach Petersburg by the coast. No hostile fleet could intercept such vessels as would convey both grain and munition. The nobility of Moscow would have rejoiced at the destruction of a superseding city, become the seat of empire. Whether winter came on ten days earlier or later, snow was sure to blockade and famish the army in Moscow; the importation of provisions (had sufficiency existed within reach) and the march northward were equally impracticable. Napoleon left behind him a signal example

that strategy is only a constituent part of a commander. In his Russian campaign even this was wanting. Xerxes lost his army not so totally as Napoleon lost his: Xerxes in great measure by the valour and skill of his enemy, Napoleon by his own imprudence. The faith of Xerxes was in his Dream, Napoleon's in his Star: the Dream was illusory, the Star a falling one.

AESCHINES AND PHOCION

Aeschines. O Phocion, again I kiss the hand that hath ever raised up the unfortunate.

Phocion. I know not, Aeschines, to what your discourse would tend.

Aeschines. Yesterday, when the malice of Demosthenes would have turned against me the vengeance of the people, by pointing me out as him whom the priestess of Apollo had designated, in declaring the Athenians were unanimous, one excepted; did you not cry aloud, *I am the man; I approve of nothing you do*? That I see you again, that I can express to you my gratitude, these are your gifts.

Phocion. And does Aeschines then suppose that I should not have performed my duty, whether he were alive or dead? To have removed from the envy of an ungenerous rival, and from the resentment of an inconsiderate populace, the citizen who possesses my confidence, the orator who defends my country, and the soldier who has fought by my side, was among those actions which are always well repaid. The line is drawn across the account: let us close it.

Aeschines. I am not insensible, nor have ever been to the afflicted; my compassion hath been

excited in the city and in the field; but when have I been moved, as I am now, to weeping? Your generosity is more pathetic than pity; and at your eloquence, stern as it is, O Phocion, my tears gush like those warm fountains which burst forth suddenly from some convulsion of the earth.

Immortal Gods! that Demades and Polyeuctus and Demosthenes should prevail in the council over Phocion! that even their projects for a campaign should be adopted, in preference to that general's who hath defeated Philip in every encounter, and should precipitate the war against the advice of a politician, by whose presages and his only, the Athenians have never been deceived!

Phocion. It is true, I am not popular.

Aeschines. Become so!

Phocion. It has been frequently and with impunity in my power to commit base actions; and I abstained: would my friend advise me at last to commit the basest of all? to court the suffrages of people I despise!

Aeschines. You court not even those who love and honour you. Thirty times and oftener have you been chosen to lead our armies, and never once were present at the election. Unparalleled glory! when have the Gods shown anything similar among men! Not Aristides nor Epaminondas, the most virtuous of mortals, not Miltiades nor Cimon, the most glorious in their exploits, enjoyed the favour of Heaven so uninterruptedly. No presents, no solicitations, no flatteries, no concessions: you never even asked a vote, however duly, customarily, and gravely.

Phocion. The highest price we can pay for anything is, to ask it: and to solicit a vote appears to me as unworthy an action as to solicit a place in a will: it is not ours, and might have been another's.

Aeschines. A question unconnected with my visit now obtrudes itself; and indeed, Phocion, I have remarked heretofore that an observation from you has made Athenians, on several occasions, forget their own business and debates, and fix themselves upon it. What is your opinion on the right and expediency of making wills?

Phocion. That it is neither expedient nor just to make them; and that the prohibition would obviate and remove (to say nothing of duplicity and servility) much injustice and discontent; the two things against which every legislator should provide the most cautiously. General and positive laws should secure the order of succession, as far as unto the grandchildren of brother and sister: beyond and out of these, property of every kind should devolve to the commonwealth. Thousands have remained unmarried, that, by giving hopes of legacies, they may obtain votes for public offices; thus being dishonest, and making others so, defrauding the community of many citizens by their celibacy, and deteriorating many by their ambition. Luxury and irregular love have produced in thousands the same effect. They care neither about offspring nor about offices, but gratify the most sordid passions at their country's most ruinous expense. If these two descriptions of citizens were prohibited from appointing heirs at their option, and obliged to indemnify the republic for their inutility and nullity, at least by so insensible a fine as that which is

levied on them after death, the members would shortly be reduced to few, and much of distress and indigence, much of dishonour and iniquity, would be averted from the people of Athens.

Aeschines. But services and friendships . . .

Phocion. . . . are rewarded by friendships and services.

Aeschines. You have never delivered your opinion upon this subject before the people.

Phocion. While passions and minds are agitated, the fewer opinions we deliver before them the better. We have laws enough ; and we should not accustom men to changes. Though many things might be altered and improved, yet alteration in state-matters, important or unimportant in themselves, is weighty in their complex and their consequences. A little car in motion shakes all the houses of a street : let it stand quiet, and you or I could almost bear it on our foot : it is thus with institutions.

Aeschines. On wills you have excited my inquiry rather than satisfied it : you have given me new thoughts, but you have also made room for more.

Phocion. Aeschines, would you take possession of a vineyard or olive-ground which nobody had given to you ?

Aeschines. Certainly not.

Phocion. Yet if it were bequeathed by will, you would ?

Aeschines. Who would hesitate ?

Phocion. In many cases the just man.

Aeschines. In some indeed.

Phocion. There is a parity in all between a will and my hypothesis of vineyard or olive-ground.

Inheriting by means of a will, we take to ourselves what nobody has given.

Aeschines. Quite the contrary: we take what he has given who does not deprive himself of any enjoyment or advantage by his gift.

Phocion. Again I say, we take it, Aeschines, from no giver at all; for he whom you denominate the giver does not exist: he who does not exist can do nothing, can accept nothing, can exchange nothing, can give nothing.

Aeschines. He gave it while he was living, and while he had these powers and faculties.

Phocion. If he gave it while he was living, then it was not what lawyers and jurists and legislators call a will or testament, on which alone we spoke.

Aeschines. True; I yield.

Phocion. The absurdities we do not see are more numerous and greater than those we discover; for truly there are few imaginable that have not crept from some corner or other into common use, and these escape our notice by familiarity.

Aeschines. We pass easily over great inequalities, and smaller shock us. He who leaps down resolutely and with impunity from a crag of Lycabettos, may be lamed perhaps for life by missing a step in the descent from a temple.

Again, if you please, to our first question.

Phocion. I would change it willingly for another, if you had not dropped something out of which I collect that you think me too indifferent to the administration of public affairs. Indifference to the welfare of our country is a crime; but if our country is reduced to a condition in which the bad are preferred to the good, the foolish to the wise, hardly any catastrophe is to be

deprecated or opposed that may shake them from their places.

Aeschines. In dangerous and trying times they fall naturally and necessarily, as flies drop out of a curtain let down in winter. Should the people demand of me what better I would propose than my adversaries, such are the extremities to which their boisterousness and levity have reduced us, I can return no answer. We are in the condition of a wolf biting off his leg to escape from the trap that has caught it.

Phocion. Calamities have assaulted mankind in so great a variety of attacks, that nothing new can be devised against them. He who would strike out a novelty in architecture, commits a folly in safety; his house and he may stand: he who attempts it in politics, carries a torch, from which at the first narrow passage we may expect a conflagration. Experience is our only teacher both in war and peace. As we formerly did against the Lacedemonians and their allies, we might by our naval superiority seize or blockade the maritime towns of Philip; we might conciliate Sparta, who has outraged and defied him; we might wait even for his death, impending from drunkenness, lust, ferocity, and inevitable in a short space of time from the vengeance to which they expose him at home. It is a dangerous thing for a monarch to corrupt a nation yet uncivilised; to corrupt a civilised one is the wisest thing he can do.

Aeschines. I see no reason why we should not send an executioner to release him from the prison-house of his crimes, with his family to attend him. Kings play at war unfairly with republics: they can only lose some earth and some creatures

they value as little, while republics lose in every soldier a part of themselves. Therefore no wise republic ought to be satisfied, unless she bring to punishment the criminal most obnoxious, and those about him who may be supposed to have made him so, his counsellors and his courtiers. Retaliation is not a thing to be feared. You might as reasonably be contented with breaking the tables and chairs of a wretch who hath murdered your children, as with slaying the soldiers of a despot who wages war against you. The least you can do in justice or in safety, is, to demand his blood of the people who are under him, tearing in pieces the nest of his brood. The Locrians have admitted only two new laws in two hundred years; because he who proposes to establish or to change one, comes with a halter round his throat, and is strangled if his proposition is rejected. Let wars, which ought to be more perilous to the adviser, be but equally so: let those who engage in them perish if they lose, I mean the principals, and new wars will be as rare among others as new laws among the Locrians.

Phocion. Both laws and wars are much addicted to the process of generation. Philip, I am afraid, has prepared the Athenians for his government; and yet I wonder how, in a free state, any man of common sense can be bribed. The corrupter would only spend his money on persons of some calculation and reflection: with how little of either must those be endowed, who do not see that they are paying a perpetuity for an annuity! Suppose that they, amid suspicions both from him in whose favour, and from those to whose detriment, they betray, can enjoy everything they receive,

yet what security have their children and dependents? Property is usually gained in hope no less of bequeathing than of enjoying it; how certain is it that these will lose more than was acquired for them! If they lose their country and their laws, what have they? The bribes of monarchs will be discovered, by the receiver, to be like pieces of furniture given to a man who, on returning home, finds that his house, in which he intended to place them, has another master. I can conceive no bribery at all seductive to the most profligate, short of that which establishes the citizen bribed among the members of a hereditary aristocracy, which in the midst of a people is a kind of foreign state, where the spoiler and traitor may take refuge. Now Philip is not so inhuman, as, in case he should be the conqueror, to inflict on us so humiliating a punishment. Our differences with him are recent, and he marches from policy, not from enmity. The Lacedemonians did indeed attempt it, in the imposition of the thirty tyrants; but such a monstrous state of degradation and of infamy roused us from our torpor, threw under us and beneath our view all other wretchedness, and we recovered (I wish we could retain it as easily!) our independence. What depresses you?

Aeschines. Oh! could I embody the spirit I receive from you, and present it in all its purity to the Athenians, they would surely hear me with as much attention, as that invoker and violator of the Gods, Demosthenes, to whom my blood would be the most acceptable libation at the feasts of Philip. Pertinacity and clamorousness, he imagines, are tests of sincerity and truth; although we know

that a weak orator raises his voice higher than a powerful one, as the lame raise their legs higher than the sound. He censures me for repeating my accusation ; he talks of tautology and diffuseness ; he who tells us gravely that a man had lived *many years*, and . . . what then ? . . . that he was rather old when he died ! Can anything be so ridiculous as the pretensions of this man, who, because I employ no action, says, *action is the first, the second, the third requisite of oratory*, while he himself is the most ungraceful of our speakers, and, even in appealing to the Gods, begins by scratching his head ?

Phocion. This is surely no inattention or indifference to the powers above. Great men lose somewhat of their greatness by being near us ; ordinary men gain much. As we are drawing nigh to humble buildings, those at a distance beyond them sink below : but we may draw so nigh to the grand and elevated as to take in only a small part of the whole. I smile at reflecting on the levity with which we contemporaries often judge of those authors whom posterity will read with most admiration : such is Demosthenes. Differ as we may from him in politics, we must acknowledge that no language is clearer, no thoughts more natural, no words more proper, no combinations more unexpected, no cadences more diversified and harmonious. Accustomed to consider as the best what is at once the most simple and emphatic, and knowing that what satisfies the understanding, conciliates the ear, I think him little if at all inferior to Aristoteles in style, though in wisdom he is as a mote to a sunbeam ; and superior to my master Plato, excellent

as he is; gorgeous indeed, but becomingly, like wealthy kings. Defective however and faulty must be the composition in prose, which you and I with our uttermost study and attention cannot understand. In poetry it is not exactly so: the greater share of it must be intelligible to the multitude; but in the best there is often an undersong of sense, which none beside the poetical mind, or one deeply versed in its mysteries, can comprehend. Euripides and Pindar have been blamed by many, who perceived not that the arrow drawn against them fell on Homer. The Gods have denied to Demosthenes many parts of genius; the urbane, the witty, the pleasurable, the pathetic. But, O Aeschines! the tree of strongest fibre and longest duration is not looked up to for its flower nor for its leaf.

Let us praise, O Aeschines, whatever we can reasonably: nothing is less laborious or irksome, no office is less importunate or nearer a sinecure. Above others praise those who contend with you for glory, since they have already borne their suffrages to your judgment by entering on the same career. Deem it a peculiar talent, and what no three men in any age have possessed, to give each great citizen or great writer his just proportion of applause. A barbarian king or his eunuch can distribute equally and fairly beans and lentils; but I perceive that Aeschines himself finds a difficulty in awarding just commendations.

A few days ago an old woman, who wrote formerly a poem on Codrus, such as Codrus with all his self-devotion would hardly have read to save his country, met me in the street, and taxed me with injustice toward Demosthenes.

'You do not know him,' said she; 'he has heart, and somewhat of genius; true he is singular and eccentric; yet I assure you I have seen compositions of his that do him credit. We must not judge of him from his speeches in public: there he is violent; but a billet of his, I do declare, is quite a treasure.'

Aeschines. What answer of yours could be the return for such silliness?

Phocion. 'Lady!' replied I, 'Demosthenes is fortunate to be protected by the same cuirass as Codrus.'

The commendations of these people are not always, what you would think them, left-handed and detractive: for singular must every man appear who is different from the rest; and he is most different from them who is most above them. If the clouds were inhabited by men, the men must be of other form and features than those on earth, and their gait would not be the same as upon the grass or pavement. Diversity no less is contracted by the habitations, as it were, and haunts, and exercises, of our minds. Singularity, when it is natural, requires no apology; when it is affected, is detestable. Such is that of our young people in bad handwriting. On my expedition to Byzantion, the city decreed that a cloak should be given me worth forty drachmas: and, when I was about to return, I folded it up carefully, in readiness for any service in which I might be employed hereafter. An officer, studious to imitate my neatness, packed up his in the same manner, not without the hope perhaps that I might remark it; and my servant, or his, on our return, mistook it. I sailed for Athens;

he, with a detachment, for Heraclea; whence he wrote to me that he had sent my cloak, requesting his own by the first conveyance. The name was quite illegible, and the carrier, whoever he was, had pursued his road homeward: I directed it then, as the only safe way, if indeed there was any safe one, *to the officer who writes worst at Heraclea.*

Come, a few more words upon Demosthenes. Do not, my friend, inveigh against him, lest a part of your opposition be attributed to envy. How many arguments is it worth to him, if you appear to act from another motive than principle! True, his eloquence is imperfect: what among men is not? In his repartees there is no playfulness, in his voice there is no flexibility, in his action there is neither dignity nor grace: but how often has he stricken you dumb with his irony! how often has he tossed you from one hand to the other with his interrogatories! Concentrated are his arguments, select and distinct and orderly his topics, ready and unfastidious his expressions, popular his allusions, plain his illustrations, easy the swell and subsidence of his periods, his dialect purely Attic. Is this no merit? Is it none in an age of idle rhetoricians, who have forgotten how their fathers and mothers spoke to them?

Aeschines. But what repetitions!

Phocion. If a thing is good it may be repeated; not indeed too frequently nor too closely, nor in words exactly the same. The repetition shows no want of invention: it shows only what is uppermost in the mind, and by what the writer is most agitated and inflamed.

Aeschines. Demosthenes tells us himself, that

he has prepared fifty-six commencements for his future speeches: how can he foresee the main subject of them all? They are, indeed, all invectives against Philip: but does Demosthenes imagine that Philip is not greatly more fertile in the means of annoyance than any Athenian is in the terms of vituperation? And which gives most annoyance? Fire and sword ravage far and wide: the tongue cannot break through the shield nor extinguish the conflagration: it brings down many blows, but heals no wounds whatever.

Phocion. I perceive in the number of these overtures to the choruses of the Furies, a stronger argument of his temerity than your acuteness hath exposed. He must have believed that Philip could not conquer us before he had time enough to compose and deliver his fifty-six speeches. I differ from him widely in my calculation. But, returning to your former charge, I would rather praise him for what he has omitted, than censure him for what he has repeated.

Aeschines. And I too.

Phocion. Those words were spoken in the tone of a competitor rather than of a comrade, as you soon may be.

Aeschines. I am jealous then? Did I demonstrate any jealousy of him when I went into the Peloponnese, to second and propel the courage his representations of the common danger had excited? where I beheld the youths of Olynthus, sent as slaves and donatives to his partisans, in that country of degenerate and dastard Greeks! What his orations had failed to bring about, my energy and zeal, my sincerity and singleness of aim, effected. The Athenians there followed me

to the temple of Agraulos, and denounced in one voice the most awful imprecations against the Peloponnesians corrupted by the gold of Macedon.

Phocion. You have many advantages over your rival: let him have some over you. There are merits which appear demerits to vulgar minds and inconsiderate auditors. Many in the populace of hearers and readers, want links and cramps to hold together the thoughts that are given them, and cry out if you hurry them on too fast. You must leap over no gap, or you leave them behind and startle them from following you. With them the pioneer is a cleverer man than the commander. I have observed in Demosthenes and Thucydides, that they lay it down as a rule, never to say what they have reason to suppose would occur to the auditor and reader, in consequence of anything said before, knowing every one to be more pleased and more easily led by us, when we bring forward his thoughts indirectly and imperceptibly, than when we elbow and outstrip them with our own. The sentences of your adversary are stout and compact as the Macedonian phalanx, animated and ardent as the sacred band of Thebes. Praise him, Aeschines, if you wish to be victorious; if you acknowledge you are vanquished, then revile him and complain. In composition I know not a superior to him; and in an assembly of the people he derives advantages from his defects themselves, from the violence of his action and from the vulgarity of his mien. Permit him to possess these advantages over you; look on him as a wrestler whose body is robust, but whose feet rest upon something slippery: use your dexterity, and reserve your

blows. Consider him, if less excellent as a statesman, citizen, or soldier, rather as a genius or demon, who, whether beneficent or malignant, hath, from an elevation far above us, launched forth many new stars into the firmament of mind.

Aeschines. O, that we had been born in other days! The best men always fall upon the worst.

Phocion. The Gods have not granted us, Aeschines, the choice of being born when we would; that of dying when we would, they have. Thank them for it, as one among the most excellent of their gifts, and remain or go, as utility or dignity may require. Whatever can happen to a wise and virtuous man from his worst enemy, whatever is most dreaded by the inconsiderate and irresolute, has happened to him frequently from himself, and not only without his inconvenience, but without his observation. We are prisoners as often as we bolt our doors, exiles as often as we walk to Munychia, and dead as often as we sleep. It would be a folly and a shame to argue that these things are voluntary, and that what our enemy imposes are not: they should be the more if they befall us from necessity, unless necessity be a weaker reason than caprice. In fine, Aeschines, I shall then call the times bad when they make me so: at present they are to be borne, as must be the storm that follows them.

ALEXANDER AND THE PRIEST OF HAMMON

Alexander. Like my father, as ignorant men called King Philip, I have at all times been the friend and defender of the gods.

Priest. Hitherto it was rather my belief that the gods may befriend and defend us mortals: but I am now instructed that a king of Macedon has taken them under his shield. Philip, if report be true, was less remarkable for his devotion.

Alexander. He was the most religious prince of the age.

Priest. On what, O Alexander, rests the support of such an exalted title?

Alexander. Not only did he swear more frequently and more awfully than any officer in the army, or any priest in the temples, but his sacrifices were more numerous and more costly.

Priest. More costly? It must be either to those whose ruin is consummated or to those whose ruin is commenced; in other words, either to the vanquished, or to those whose ill-fortune is of earlier date, the born subjects of the vanquisher.

Alexander. He exhibited the surest and most manifest proof of his piety when he defeated Onomarchus, general of the Phocians, who had dared to plough a piece of ground belonging to Apollo.

Priest. Apollo might have made it as hot work for the Phocians who were ploughing his ground, as he formerly did at Troy to those unruly Greeks who took away his priest's daughter. He shot a

good many mules, to show he was in earnest, and would have gone on shooting both cattle and men until he came at last to the offender.

Alexander. He instructed kings by slaying their people before their eyes: surely he would never set so bad an example as striking at the kings themselves. Philip, to demonstrate in the presence of all Greece his regard for Apollo of Delphi, slew six thousand, and threw into the sea three thousand, enemies of religion.

Priest. Alexander! Alexander! the enemies of religion are the cruel, and not the sufferers by cruelty. Is it unpardonable in the ignorant to be in error about their gods when the wise are in doubt about their fathers?

Alexander. I am not: Philip is not mine.

Priest. Probable enough.

Alexander. Who then is, or ought to be, but Jupiter himself?

Priest. The priests of Pella are abler to return an oracle on that matter than we of the Oasis.

Alexander. We have no oracle at Pella.

Priest. If you had, it might be dumb for once.

Alexander. I am losing my patience.

Priest. I have given thee part of mine, seeing thee but scantily provided; yet, if thy gestures are any signification, it sits but awkwardly upon thy shoulders.

Alexander. This to me! the begotten of a god! the benefactor of all mankind!

Priest. Such as Philip was to the three thousand, when he devised so magnificent a bath for their recreation. Plenty of pumice! rather a lack of napkins!

Alexander. No trifling! no false wit!

Priest. True wit, to every man, is that which falls on another.

Alexander. To come at once to the point; I am ready to prove that neither Jason nor Bacchus, in their memorable expeditions, did greater service to mankind than I have done, and am about to do.

Priest. Jason gave them an example of falsehood and ingratitude: Bacchus made them drunk: thou appearest a proper successor to these worthies.

Alexander. Such insolence to crowned heads! such levity on heroes and gods!

Priest. Hark ye, Alexander! we priests are privileged.

Alexander. I too am privileged to speak of my own great actions; if not as liberator of Greece and consolidator of her disjointed and jarring interests, at least as the benefactor of Egypt and of Jupiter.

Priest. Here indeed it would be unseemly to laugh; for it is evident on thy royal word that Jupiter is much indebted to thee; and equally evident, from the same authority, that thou wantest nothing from him but his blessing . . . unless it be a public acknowledgment that he has been guilty of another act of bastardy, more becoming his black curls than his grey decrepitude.

Alexander. Amazement! to talk thus of Jupiter!

Priest. Only to those who are in his confidence: a mistress for instance, or a son, as thou sayest thou art.

Alexander. Yea, by my head and by my sceptre am I. Nothing is more certain.

Priest. We will discourse upon that presently.

Alexander. Discourse upon it this instant.

Priest. How is it possible that Jupiter should be thy father, when . .

Alexander. When what ?

Priest. Couldst not thou hear me on ?

Alexander. Thou askest a foolish question.

Priest. I did not ask whether I should be acknowledged the son of Jupiter.

Alexander. Thou indeed !

Priest. Yet, by the common consent of mankind, lands and tenements are assigned to us, and we are called '*divine*', as their children ; and there are some who assert that the gods themselves have less influence and less property on earth than we.

Alexander. All this is well : only use your influence for your benefactors.

Priest. Before we proceed any farther, tell me in what manner thou art or wilt ever be the benefactor of Egypt.

Alexander. The same exposition will demonstrate that I shall be likewise the benefactor of Jupiter. It is my intention to build a city, in a situation very advantageous for commerce : of course the frequenters of such a mart will continually make offerings to Jupiter.

Priest. For what ?

Alexander. For prosperity.

Priest. Alas ! Alexander, the prosperous make few offerings ; and Hermes has the dexterity to intercept the greater part of them. In Egypt there are cities enough already : I should say too many : for men prey upon one another when they are penned together close.

Alexander. There is then no glory in building a magnificent city?

Priest. Great may be the glory.

Alexander. Here at least thou art disposed to do me justice.

Priest. I never heard until this hour that among thy other attainments was architecture.

Alexander. Scornful and insolent man! dost thou take me for an architect?

Priest. I was about to do so; and certainly not in scorn, but to assuage the feeling of it.

Alexander. How?

Priest. He who devises the plan of a great city, of its streets, its squares, its palaces, its temples, must exercise much reflection and many kinds of knowledge: and yet those which strike most the vulgar, most even the scientific, require less care, less knowledge, less beneficence, than what are called the viler parts, and are the most obscure and unobserved; the construction of the sewers; the method of exempting the aqueducts from the incroachment of their impurities; the conduct of canals for fresh air in every part of the house, attempering the summer heats; the exclusion of reptiles; and even the protection from insects. The conveniences and comforts of life in these countries, depend on such matters.

Alexander. My architect, I doubt not, has considered them maturely.

Priest. Who is he?

Alexander. I will not tell thee: the whole glory is mine: I gave the orders, and first conceived the idea.

Priest. A hound upon a heap of dust may dream of a fine city, if he has ever seen one; and a mad-

man in chains may dream of building it, and may even give directions about it.

Alexander. I will not bear this.

Priest. Were it false, thou couldst bear it; thou wouldst call the bearing of it magnanimity; and wiser men would do the same for centuries. As such wisdom and such greatness are not what I bend my back to measure, do favour me with what thou wert about to say when thou begannest 'nothing is more certain'; since I presume it must appertain to geometry, of which I am fond.

Alexander. I did not come hither to make figures upon the sand.

Priest. Fortunate for thee, if the figure thou wilt leave behind thee could be as easily wiped out.

Alexander. What didst thou say?

Priest. I was musing.

Alexander. Even the building of cities is in thy sight neither glorious nor commendable.

Priest. Truly, to build them is not among the undertakings I the most applaud in the powerful; but to destroy them is the very foremost of the excesses I abhor. All the cities of the earth should rise up against the man who ruins one. Until this sentiment is predominant, the peaceful can have no protection, the virtuous no encouragement, the brave no countenance, the prosperous no security. We priests communicate one with another extensively; and even in these solitudes thy exploits against Thebes have reached and shocked us. What hearts must lie in the bosoms of those who applaud thee for preserving the mansion of a deceased poet in the general ruin,

while the relatives of the greatest patriot that ever drew breath under heaven, of the soldier at whose hospitable hearth thy father learned all that thou knowest and much more, of Epaminondas (dost thou hear me ?), were murdered or enslaved. Now begin the demonstration than which ' nothing is more certain '.

Alexander. Nothing is more certain, or what a greater number of witnesses are ready to attest, than that my mother Olympias, who hated Philip, was pregnant of me by a serpent.

Priest. Of what race ?

Alexander. Dragon.

Priest. Thy mother Olympias hated Philip, a well-made man, young, courageous, libidinous, witty, prodigal of splendour, indifferent to wealth, the greatest captain, the most jovial companion, and the most potent monarch in Europe.

Alexander. My father Philip, I would have thee to know . . I mean my reputed father . . was also the greatest politician in the world.

Priest. This indeed I am well aware of ; but I did not number it among his excellences in the eyes of a woman : it would have been almost the only reason why she should have preferred the serpent, the head of the family. We live here, O Alexander, in solitude ; yet we are not the less curious, but on the contrary the more, to learn what passes in the world around.

Olympias then did really fall in love with a serpent ? and she was induced . .

Alexander. Induced ! do serpents induce people ! They coil and climb and subdue them.

Priest. The serpent must have been dexterous . .

Alexander. No doubt he was.

Priest. But women have such an abhorrence of serpents, that Olympias would surely have rather run away.

Alexander. How could she ?

Priest. Or called out.

Alexander. Women never do that, lest somebody should hear them.

Priest. All mortals seem to bear an innate antipathy to this reptile.

Alexander. Mind ! mind what thou sayest ! Do not call my father a reptile.

Priest. Even thou, with all thy fortitude, wouldst experience a shuddering at the sight of a serpent in thy bed-clothes.

Alexander. Not at all. Beside, I do not hesitate in my belief that on this occasion it was Jupiter himself. The priests in Macedon were unanimous upon it.

Priest. When it happened ?

Alexander. When it happened no one mentioned it, for fear of Philip.

Priest. What would he have done ?

Alexander. He was choleric.

Priest. Would he have made war upon Jupiter ?

Alexander. By my soul ! I know not ; but I would have done it in his place. As a son, I am dutiful and compliant : as a husband and king, there is not a thunderbolt in heaven that should deter me from my rights.

Priest. Did any of the priesthood see the dragon, as he was entering or retreating from the chamber ?

Alexander. Many saw a great light in it.

Priest. He would want one.

Alexander. This seems like irony : sacred things

do not admit it. What thousands saw, nobody should doubt. The sky opened, lightnings flew athwart it, and strange voices were heard.

Priest. Juno's the loudest, I suspect.

Alexander. Being a king, and the conqueror of kings, let me remind thee, surely I may be treated here with as much deference and solemnity as one priest uses toward another.

Priest. Certainly with no less, O king! Since thou hast insisted that I should devise the best means of persuading the world of this awful verity, thou wilt excuse me, in thy clemency, if my remarks and interrogatories should appear prolix.

Alexander. Remark anything; but do not interrogate and press me: kings are unaccustomed to it. I will consign to thee every land from the centre to the extremities of Africa; the Fortunate Isles will I also give to thee, adding the Hyperborean; I wish only the consent of the religious who officiate in this temple, and their testimony to the world in declaration of my parentage.

Priest. Many thanks! we have all we want.

Alexander. I cannot think you are true priests then; and if your oath on the divinity of my descent were not my object, and therefore not to be abandoned, I should regret that I had offered so much in advance, and should be provoked to deduct one half of the Fortunate Isles, and the greater part of the Hyperborean.

Priest. Those are exactly the regions, O king, which our moderation would induce us to resign. Africa, we know, is worth little: yet we are as well contented with the almonds, the dates, the melons, the figs, the fresh butter, the stags, the antelopes, the kids, the tortoises, and the quails

about us, as we should be if they were brought to us after fifty days' journey through the desert.

Alexander. Really now, is it possible that, in a matter so evident, your oracle can find any obstacle or difficulty in proclaiming me what I am?

Priest. The difficulty (slight it must be acknowledged) is this: our Jupiter is horned.

Alexander. So was my father.

Priest. The children of Jupiter love one another: this we believe here in Lybia.

Alexander. And rightly: no affection was ever so strong as that of Castor and Pollux. I myself feel a genuine love for them, and greater still for Hercules.

Priest. If thou hadst a brother or sister on earth, Jove-born, thou wouldst embrace the same most ardently.

Alexander. As becomes my birth and heart.

Priest. O Alexander! may thy godlike race never degenerate!

Alexander. Now indeed the Powers above do inspire thee.

Priest. Jupiter, I am commanded by him to declare, is verily thy father.

Alexander. He owns me then! he owns me! What sacrifice worthy of this indulgence can I offer to him?

Priest. An obedient mind, and a camel-load of nard and amomum for his altar.

Alexander. I smell here the exquisite perfume of benzoin.

Priest. It grows in our vicinity. The nostrils of Jupiter love changes: he is consistent in all parts, being Jupiter. He has other sons and daughters in the world, begotten by him under

the same serpentine form, although unknown to common mortals.

Alexander. Indeed!

Priest. I declare it unto thee.

Alexander. I cannot doubt it then.

Priest. Not all indeed of thy comeliness in form and features, but awful and majestic. It is the will of Jupiter, that, like the Persian monarchs, whose sceptre he hath transferred to thee, thou marryest thy sister.

Alexander. Willingly. In what land upon earth liveth she, whom thou designest for me?

Priest. The Destinies and Jupiter himself have conducted thee, O Alexander, to the place where thy nuptials shall be celebrated.

Alexander. When did they so?

Priest. Now; at this very hour.

Alexander. Let me see the bride, if it be lawful to lift up her veil.

Priest. Follow me.

Alexander. The steps of this cavern are dark and slippery; but it terminates, no doubt, like the Eleusinian, in pure light and refreshing shades.

Priest. Wait here an instant: it will grow lighter.

Alexander. What do I see yonder?

Priest. Where?

Alexander. Close under the wall, rising and lowering, regularly and slowly, like a long weed on a quiet river, when a fragment hath dropped into it from the bank above.

Priest. Thou descriest, O Alexander, the daughter of Jupiter, the watchful virgin, the preserver of our treasures. Without her they might be carried away by the wanderers of the desert;

but they fear, as they should do, the daughter of Jupiter.

Alexander. Hell and Furies! what hast thou been saying? I heard little of it. Daughter of Jupiter!

Priest. Hast thou any fancy for the silent and shy maiden? I will leave you together . . .

Alexander. Orcus and Erebus!

Priest. Be discreet! Restrain your raptures until the rites are celebrated.

Alexander. Rites! Infernal pest! O horror! abomination! A vast panting snake!

Priest. Say '*dragon*', O king! and beware how thou callest horrid and abominable the truly begotten of our lord thy father.

Alexander. What means this? inhuman traitor! Open the door again: lead me back. Are my conquests to terminate in the jaws of a reptile?

Priest. Do the kings of Macedon call their sisters such names?

Alexander. Let me out, I say!

Priest. Inconstant man! I doubt even whether the marriage hath been consummated. Dost thou question her worthiness? prove her, prove her. We have certain signs and manifestations that Jupiter begat this powerful creature, thy elder sister. Her mother hid her shame and confusion in the desert, where she still wanders, and looks with an evil eye on everything in the form of man. The poorest, vilest, most abject of the sex, holdeth her head no lower than she.

Alexander. Impostor!

Priest. Do not the sympathies of thy heart inform thee that this solitary queen is of the same lineage as thine?

Alexander. What temerity! what impudence! what deceit!

Priest. Temerity! How so, Alexander! Surely man cannot claim too near an affinity to his Creator, if he will but obey him, as I know thou certainly wilt in this tender alliance. Impudence and deceit were thy other accusations: how little merited! I only traced the collateral branches of the genealogical tree thou pointedst out to me.

Alexander. Draw back the bolt: let me pass: stand out of my way. Thy hand upon my shoulder! Were my sword beside me, this monster should lick thy blood.

Priest. Patience! O king! The iron portal is in my hand: if the hinges turn, thy godhead is extinct. No, Alexander, no! it must not be.

Alexander. Lead me then forth. I swear to silence.

Priest. As thou wilt.

Alexander. I swear to friendship; lead me but out again.

Priest. Come; although I am much interested in the happiness of his two children whom I serve . . .

Alexander. Persecute me no longer; in the name of Jupiter!

Priest. I can hardly give it up. To have been the maker of such a match! what felicity! what glory! Think once more upon it. There are many who could measure themselves with thee, head to head; let me see the man who will do it with your child at the end of the year, if thou embracest with good heart and desirable success this daughter of deity.

Alexander. Enough, my friend! I have deserved

it; but we must deceive men, or they will either hate us or despise us.

Priest. Now thou talkest reasonably. I here pronounce thy divorce. Moreover, thou shalt be the son of Hammon in Libya, of Mithras in Persia, of Philip in Macedon, of Olympian Jove in Greece: but never for the future teach priests new creeds.

Alexander. How my father Philip would have laughed over his cups at such a story as this!

Priest. Alexander! let it prove to thee thy folly.

Alexander. If such is my folly, what is that of others? Thou wilt acknowledge and proclaim me the progeny of Jupiter?

Priest. Ay, ay.

Alexander. People must believe it.

Priest. The only doubt will be among the shrewder, whether, being so extremely old and having left off his pilgrimages so many years, he could have given our unworthy world so spirited an offspring as thou art.

Come and sacrifice.

Alexander. Priest! I see thou art a man of courage: henceforward we are in confidence. Take mine with my hand: give me thine. Confess to me, as the first proof of it, didst thou never shrink back from so voracious and intractable a monster as that accursed snake?

Priest. We caught her young, and fed her on goat's milk, as our Jupiter himself was fed in the caverns of Crete.

Alexander. Your Jupiter! *that* was another.

Priest. Some people say so: but the same cradle serves for the whole family, the same story will do for them all. As for fearing this young

personage in the treasury-vault, we fear her no more, son Alexander, than the priests of Egypt do his holiness the crocodile-god. The gods and their pedagogues are manageable to the hand that feeds them.

Alexander. Canst thou talk thus ?

Priest. Of false gods, not of the true one.

Alexander. One ! are there not many ? Some dozens ? some hundreds ?

Priest. Not in our vicinity ; praised be Hammon ! And plainly to speak, there is nowhere another, let who will have begotten him, whether on cloud or meadow, feather-bed or barn-floor, worth a salt locust or a last year's date-fruit.

These are our mysteries, if thou must needs know them ; and those of other priesthoods are the like.

Alexander, my boy, do not stand there, with thy arms folded and thy head aside, pondering. Jupiter the Ram for ever !

Alexander. Glory to Jupiter the Ram !

Priest. Thou stoppest on a sudden thy prayers and praises to father Jupiter. Son Alexander ! art thou not satisfied ? What ails thee, drawing the back of thy hand across thine eyes ?

Alexander. A little dust flew into them as the door opened.

Priest. Of that dust are the sands of the desert and the kings of Macedon.

EPICURUS, LEONTION, AND TERNISSA

Leontion. Your situation for a garden, Epicurus, is, I think, very badly chosen.

Epicurus. Why do you think so, my Leontion ?

Leontion. First, because it is more than twenty stadia from the city.

Epicurus. Certainly the distance is inconvenient, my charming friend ! it is rather too far off for us to be seen, and rather too near for us to be regretted. Here, however, I shall build no villa, nor anything else, and the longest time we can be detained, is from the rising to the setting sun. Now, pray, your other reason why the spot is so ineligible.

Leontion. Because it commands no view of the town or of the harbour, unless we mount upon that knoll, where we could scarcely stand together, for the greater part is occupied by those three pinasters, old and horrible as the three Furies. Surely you will cut them down.

Epicurus. Whatever Leontion commands. To me there is this advantage in a place at some distance from the city. Having by no means the full possession of my faculties where I hear unwelcome and intrusive voices, or unexpected and irregular sounds that excite me involuntarily to listen, I assemble and arrange my thoughts with freedom and with pleasure in the fresh air and open sky ; and they are more lively and vigorous and exuberant when I catch them as I walk about, and commune with them in silence and seclusion.

Leontion. It always has appeared to me that conversation brings them forth more readily and plenteously; and that the ideas of one person no sooner come out than another's follow them, whether from the same side or from the opposite.

Epicurus. They do: but these are not the thoughts we keep for seed: they come up weak by coming up close together. In the country the mind is soothed and satisfied: here is no restraint of motion or of posture. These things, little and indifferent as they may seem, are not so: for the best tempers have need of ease and liberty, to keep them in right order long enough for the purposes of composition; and many a froward axiom, many an inhumane thought, hath arisen from sitting inconveniently, from hearing a few unpleasant sounds, from the confinement of a gloomy chamber, or from the want of symmetry in it. We are not aware of this, until we find an exemption from it in groves, on promontories, or along the sea-shore, or wherever else we meet Nature face to face, undisturbed and solitary.

Ternissa. You would wish us then away?

Epicurus. I speak of solitude; you of desolation.

Ternissa. O flatterer! is this philosophy?

Epicurus. Yes; if you are a thought the richer or a moment the happier for it.

Ternissa. Write it down then in the next volume you intend to publish.

Leontion. I interpose and controvert it. That is not philosophy which serves only for one.

Epicurus. Just criterion! I will write down your sentence instead, and leave mine at the discretion of Ternissa. And now, my beautiful Ternissa, let me hear *your* opinion of the situation

I have chosen. I perceive that you too have fixed your eyes on the pinasters.

Ternissa. I will tell you in verses; for I do think these are verses, or nearly:

> I hate those trees that never lose their foliage:
> They seem to have no sympathy with Nature:
> Winter and Summer are alike to them.

The broad and billowy summits of yon monstrous trees, one would imagine were made for the storms to rest upon when they are tired of raving. And what bark! It occurs to me, Epicurus, that I have rarely seen climbing plants attach themselves to these trees, as they do to the oak, the maple, the beech, and others.

Leontion. If your remark be true, perhaps the resinous are not embraced by them so frequently because they dislike the odour of the resin, or some other property of the juices; for they too have their affections and antipathies, no less than their countries and their climes.

Ternissa. For shame! what would you with me?

Epicurus. I would not interrupt you while you were speaking, nor while Leontion was replying; this is against my rules and practice; having now ended, kiss me, Ternissa!

Ternissa. Impudent man! in the name of Pallas, why should I kiss you?

Epicurus. Because you expressed hatred.

Ternissa. Do we kiss when we hate?

Epicurus. There is no better end of hating. The sentiment should not exist one moment; and if the hater give a kiss on being ordered to do it, even to a tree or a stone, that tree or stone becomes the monument of a fault extinct.

Ternissa. I promise you I never will hate a tree again.

Epicurus. I told you so.

Leontion. Nevertheless I suspect, my Ternissa, you will often be surprised into it. I was very near saying, 'I hate these rude square stones!' Why did you leave them here, Epicurus?

Epicurus. It is true, they are the greater part square, and seem to have been cut out in ancient times for plinths and columns: they are also rude. Removing the smaller, that I might plant violets and cyclamens and convolvuluses and strawberries, and such other herbs as grow willingly in dry places, I left a few of these for seats, a few for tables and for couches.

Leontion. Delectable couches!

Epicurus. Laugh as you may, they will become so when they are covered with moss and ivy, and those other two sweet plants, whose names I do not remember to have found in any ancient treatise, but which I fancy I have heard Theophrastus call 'Leontion' and 'Ternissa'.

Ternissa. The bold insidious false creature?

Epicurus. What is that volume? may I venture to ask, Leontion? Why do you blush?

Leontion. I do not blush about it.

Epicurus. You are offended then, my dear girl.

Leontion. No, nor offended. I will tell you presently what it contains. Account to me first for your choice of so strange a place to walk in: a broad ridge, the summit and one side barren, the other a wood of rose-laurels impossible to penetrate. The worst of all is, we can see nothing of the city or the Parthenon, unless from the very top.

Epicurus. The place commands, in my opinion, a most perfect view.

Leontion. Of what, pray?

Epicurus. Of itself; seeming to indicate that we, Leontion, who philosophise, should do the same.

Leontion. Go on, go on! say what you please: I will not hate anything yet. Why have you torn up by the root all these little mountain ash-trees? This is the season of their beauty: come, Ternissa, let us make ourselves necklaces and armlets, such as may captivate old Sylvanus and Pan: you shall have your choice. But why have you torn them up?

Epicurus. On the contrary, they were brought hither this morning. Sosimenes is spending large sums of money on an olive-ground, and has uprooted some hundreds of them, of all ages and sizes. I shall cover the rougher part of the hill with them, setting the clematis and vine and honeysuckle against them, to unite them.

Ternissa. O what a pleasant thing it is to walk in the green light of the vine-leaves, and to breathe the sweet odour of their invisible flowers!

Epicurus. The scent of them is so delicate that it requires a sigh to inhale it; and this, being accompanied and followed by enjoyment, renders the fragrance so exquisite. Ternissa, it is this, my sweet friend, that made you remember the green light of the foliage, and think of the invisible flowers as you would of some blessing from heaven.

Ternissa. I see feathers flying at certain distances just above the middle of the promontory: what can they mean?

Epicurus. Cannot you imagine them to be

feathers from the wings of Zethes and Calaïs, who came hither out of Thrace to behold the favourite haunts of their mother Orithyeia? From the precipice that hangs over the sea a few paces from the pinasters, she is reported to have been carried off by Boreas; and these remains of the primeval forest have always been held sacred on that belief.

Leontion. The story is an idle one.

Ternissa. O no, Leontion! the story is very true.

Leontion. Indeed?

Ternissa. I have heard not only odes, but sacred and most ancient hymns upon it; and the voice of Boreas is often audible here, and the screams of Orithyeia.

Leontion. The feathers then really may belong to Calaïs and Zethes.

Ternissa. I don't believe it: the winds would have carried them away.

Leontion. The gods, to manifest their power, as they often do by miracles, could as easily fix a feather eternally on the most tempestuous promontory, as the mark of their feet upon the flint.

Ternissa. They could indeed: but we know the one to a certainty, and have no such authority for the other. I have seen these pinasters from the extremity of the Piraeus, and have heard mention of the altar raised to Boreas: where is it?

Epicurus. As it stands in the centre of the platform, we cannot see it from hence. There is the only piece of level ground in the place.

Leontion. Ternissa intends the altar to prove the truth of the story.

Epicurus. Ternissa is slow to admit that even

the young can deceive, much less the old; the gay, much less the serious.

Leontion. It is as wise to moderate our belief as our desires.

Epicurus. Some minds require much belief, some thrive on little. Rather an exuberance of it is feminine and beautiful. It acts differently on different hearts: it troubles some, it consoles others: in the generous it is the nurse of tenderness and kindness, of heroism and self-devotion: in the ungenerous it fosters pride, impatience of contradiction and appeal, and, like some waters, what it finds a dry stick or hollow straw, it leaves a stone.

Ternissa. We want it chiefly to make the way of death an easy one.

Epicurus. There is no easy path leading out of life, and few are the easy ones that lie within it. I would adorn and smoothen the declivity, and make my residence as commodious as its situation and dimensions may allow; but principally, I would cast underfoot the empty fear of death.

Ternissa. O! how can you?

Epicurus. By many arguments already laid down: then by thinking that some perhaps, in almost every age, have been timid and delicate as Ternissa; and yet have slept soundly, have felt no parent's or friend's tear upon their faces, no throb against their breasts; in short, have been in the calmest of all possible conditions, while those around were in the most deplorable and desperate.

Ternissa. It would pain me to die, if it were only at the idea that any one I love would grieve too much for me.

Epicurus. Let the loss of our friends be our only grief, and the apprehension of displeasing them our only fear.

Leontion. No apostrophes! no interjections! Your argument was unsound; your means futile.

Epicurus. Tell me then, whether the horse of a rider on the road should not be spurred forward if he started at a shadow.

Leontion. Yes.

Epicurus. I thought so: it would however be better to guide him quietly up to it, and to show him that it *was* one. Death is less than a shadow: it represents nothing, even imperfectly.

Leontion. Then at the best what is it? why care about it, think about it, or remind us that it must befall us? Would you take the same trouble, when you see my hair entwined with ivy, to make me remember that, although the leaves are green and pliable, the stem is fragile and rough, and that before I go to bed I shall have many knots and entanglements to extricate? Let me have them; but let me not hear of them until the time is come.

Epicurus. I would never think of death as an embarrassment, but as a blessing.

Ternissa. How! a blessing?

Epicurus. What, if it makes our enemies cease to hate us? what, if it makes our friends love us the more?

Leontion. Us? According to your doctrine, we shall not exist at all.

Epicurus. I spoke of that which is consolatory while we are here, and of that which in plain reason ought to render us contented to stay no longer. You, Leontion, would make others

better: and better they certainly will be, when their hostilities languish in an empty field, and their rancour is tired with treading upon dust. The generous affections stir about us at the dreary hour of death, as the blossoms of the Median apple swell and diffuse their fragrance in the cold.

Ternissa. I cannot bear to think of passing the Styx, lest Charon should touch me: he is so old and wilful, so cross and ugly.

Epicurus. Ternissa! Ternissa! I would accompany you thither, and stand between. Would not you too, Leontion?

Leontion. I don't know.

Ternissa. O! that we could go together!

Leontion. Indeed!

Ternissa. All three, I mean . . I said . . or was going to say it. How ill-natured you are, Leontion! to misinterpret me; I could almost cry.

Leontion. Do not, do not, Ternissa! Should that tear drop from your eyelash you would look less beautiful.

Epicurus. Whenever I see a tear on a beautiful young face, twenty of mine run to meet it. If it is well to conquer a world, it is better to conquer two.

Ternissa. That is what Alexander of Macedon wept because he could not accomplish.

Epicurus. Ternissa! we three can accomplish it; or any one of us.

Ternissa. How? pray!

Epicurus. We can conquer this world and the next: for you will have another, and nothing should be refused you.

Ternissa. The next by piety: but this, in what manner?

Epicurus. By indifference to all who are indifferent to us; by taking joyfully the benefit that comes spontaneously; by wishing no more intensely for what is a hair's breadth beyond our reach than for a draught of water from the Ganges; and by fearing nothing in another life.

Ternissa. This, O Epicurus! is the grand impossibility.

Epicurus. Do you believe the gods to be as benevolent and good as you are? or do you not?

Ternissa. Much kinder, much better in every way.

Epicurus. Would you kill or hurt the sparrow that you keep in your little dressing-room with a string around the leg, because he hath flown where you did not wish him to fly?

Ternissa. No: it would be cruel: the string about the leg of so little and weak a creature is enough.

Epicurus. You think so; I think so; God thinks so. This I may say confidently: for whenever there is a sentiment in which strict justice and pure benevolence unite, it must be this.

Ternissa. O Epicurus! when you speak thus . . .

Leontion. Well, Ternissa! what then?

Ternissa. When Epicurus teaches us such sentiments as this, I am grieved that he has not so great an authority with the Athenians as some others have.

Leontion. You will grieve more, I suspect, my Ternissa, when he possesses that authority.

Ternissa. What will he do?

Leontion. Why turn pale? I am not about to answer that he will forget or leave you. No; but the voice comes deepest from the sepulchre,

and a great name has its root in the dead body. If you invited a company to a feast, you might as well place round the table live sheep and oxen, and vases of fish and cages of quails, as you would invite a company of friendly hearers to the philosopher who is yet living.[1] One would imagine that the iris of our intellectual eye were lessened by the glory of his presence, and that, like eastern kings, he could be looked at near, only when his limbs are stiff, by wax-light, in closed curtains.

Epicurus. One of whom we know little leaves us a ring or other token of remembrance, and we express a sense of pleasure and of gratitude: one of whom we know nothing writes a book, the contents of which might (if we would let them) have done us more good and might have given us more pleasure, and we revile him for it. The book may do what the legacy cannot; it may be pleasurable and serviceable to others as well as ourselves: we would hinder this too. In fact all other love is extinguished by self-love: beneficence, humanity, justice, philosophy, sink under it. While we insist that we are looking for Truth, we commit a falsehood. It never was the first object with any one, and with few the second.

Feed unto replenishment your quieter fancies, my sweetest little Ternissa! and let the gods, both youthful and aged, both gentle and boisterous, administer to them hourly on these sunny downs: what can they do better?

[1] Seneca quotes a letter of Epicurus, in which his friendship with Metrodorus is mentioned, with a remark that the obscurity in which they had lived, so great indeed as to let them rest not only unknown, but almost unheard of, in the midst of Greece, was by no means to be considered as an abatement of their good fortune.

Leontion. But those feathers, Ternissa, what god's may they be? since you will not pick them up, nor restore them to Calaïs nor to Zethes.

Ternissa. I do not think they belong to any god whatever; and shall never be persuaded of it unless Epicurus say it is so.

Leontion. O unbelieving creature! do you reason against the immortals?

Ternissa. It was yourself who doubted, or appeared to doubt, the flight of Orithyeia. By admitting too much we endanger our religion. Beside, I think I discern some upright stakes at equal distances, and am pretty sure the feathers are tied to them by long strings.

Epicurus. You have guessed the truth.

Ternissa. Of what use are they there?

Epicurus. If you have ever seen the foot of a statue broken off just below the ankle, you have then, Leontion and Ternissa, seen the form of the ground about us. The lower extremities of it are divided into small ridges, as you will perceive if you look round; and these are covered with corn, olives, and vines. At the upper part, where cultivation ceases, and where those sheep and goats are grazing, begins my purchase. The ground rises gradually unto near the summit, where it grows somewhat steep, and terminates in a precipice. Across the middle I have traced a line, denoted by those feathers, from one dingle to the other; the two terminations of my intended garden. The distance is nearly a thousand paces, and the path, perfectly on a level, will be two paces broad, so that I may walk between you; but another could not join us conveniently. From this there will be several, circuitous and spiral,

leading by the easiest ascent to the summit; and several more, to the road along the cultivation underneath: here will however be but one entrance. Wild pomegranates and irregular tufts of gorse unite their forces against invasion.

Ternissa. Where will you place the statues? for undoubtedly you must have some.

Epicurus. I will have some models for statues. Pygmalion prayed the gods to give life to the image he adored: I will not pray them to give marble to mine. Never may I lay my wet cheek upon the foot under which is inscribed the name of Leontion or Ternissa!

Leontion. Do not make us melancholy: never let us think that the time can come when we shall lose our friends. Glory, literature, philosophy, have this advantage over friendship: remove one object from them, and others fill the void; remove one from friendship, one only, and not the earth, nor the universality of worlds, no, nor the intellect that soars above and comprehends them, can replace it.

Epicurus. Dear Leontion! always amiable, always graceful! how lovely do you now appear to me! what beauteous action accompanied your words!

Leontion. I used none whatever.

Epicurus. The white arm was then, as it is now, over the shoulder of Ternissa; and her breath imparted a fresh bloom to your cheek, a new music to your voice. No friendship is so cordial or so delicious as that of girl for girl; no hatred so intense and immovable as that of woman for woman. In youth you love one above the others of your sex: in riper age you hate all, more

or less, in proportion to similarity of accomplishments and pursuits; which sometimes (I wish it were oftener) are bonds of union to men. In us you more easily pardon faults than excellences in each other. *Your* tempers are such, my beloved scholars, that even this truth does not ruffle them; and such is your affection, that I look with confidence to its unabated ardour at twenty.

Leontion. Oh, then, I am to love Ternissa almost fifteen months!

Ternissa. And I am destined to survive the loss of it three months above four years!

Epicurus. Incomparable creatures! may it be eternal! In loving ye shall follow no example: ye shall step securely over the iron rule laid down for others by the Destinies, and *you* for ever be Leontion, and *you* Ternissa.

Leontion. Then indeed we should not want statues.

Ternissa. But men, who are vainer creatures, would be good for nothing without them: they must be flattered, even by the stones.

Epicurus. Very true. Neither the higher arts nor the civic virtues can flourish extensively without the statues of illustrious men. But gardens are not the places for them. Sparrows wooing on the general's truncheon (unless he be such a general as one of ours in the last war), and snails besliming the emblems of the poet, do not remind us worthily of their characters. Porticoes are their proper situations, and those the most frequented. Even there they may lose all honour and distinction, whether from the thoughtlessness of magistrates or from the malignity of rivals. Our own city, the least exposed of any to the

effects of either, presents us a disheartening example. When the Thebans in their jealousy condemned Pindar to the payment of a fine, for having praised the Athenians too highly, our citizens erected a statue of bronze to him.

Leontion. Jealousy of Athens made the Thebans fine him; and jealousy of Thebes made the Athenians thus record it.

Epicurus. And jealousy of Pindar, I suspect, made some poet persuade the arcons to render the distinction a vile and worthless one, by placing his effigy near a king's, one Evagoras of Cyprus.

Ternissa. Evagoras, I think I remember to have read in the inscription, was rewarded in this manner for his reception of Conon, defeated by the Lacedemonians.

Epicurus. Gratitude was due to him, and some such memorial to record it. External reverence should be paid unsparingly to the higher magistrates of every country who perform their offices exemplarily: yet they are not on this account to be placed in the same degree with men of primary genius. They never exalt the human race, and rarely benefit it; and their benefits are local and transitory, while those of a great writer are universal and eternal.

If the gods did indeed bestow on us a portion of their fire, they seem to have lighted it in sport and left it: the harder task and the nobler is performed by that genius who raises it clear and glowing from its embers, and makes it applicable to the purposes that dignify or delight our nature. I have ever said, 'Reverence the rulers.' Let then his image stand; but stand apart from Pindar's. Pallas and Jove! defend me from being

carried down the stream of time among a shoal of royalets, and the rootless weeds they are hatched on.

Ternissa. So much piety would deserve the exemption, even though your writings did not hold out the decree.

Leontion. Child, the compliment is ill turned: if you are ironical, as you must be on the piety of Epicurus, Atticism requires that you should continue to be so, at least to the end of the sentence.

Ternissa. Irony is my abhorrence. Epicurus may appear less pious than some others; but I am certain he is more; otherwise the gods would never have given him . . .

Leontion. What? what? let us hear!

Ternissa. Leontion!

Leontion. Silly girl! Were there any hibiscus or broom growing near at hand, I would send him away and whip you.

Epicurus. There is fern, which is better.

Leontion. I was not speaking to you: but now you shall have something to answer for yourself. Although you admit no statues in the country, you might at least methinks have discovered a retirement with a fountain in it: here I see not even a spring.

Epicurus. Fountain I can hardly say there is; but on the left there is a long crevice or chasm, which we have never yet visited, and which we cannot discern until we reach it. This is full of soft mould, very moist; and many high reeds and canes are growing there; and the rock itself too drips with humidity along it, and is covered with more tufted moss and more variegated lichens.

This crevice, with its windings and sinuosities, is about four hundred paces long, and in many parts eleven, twelve, thirteen feet wide, but generally six or seven. I shall plant it wholly with lilies of the valley; leaving the irises which occupy the sides as well as the clefts, and also those other flowers of paler purple, from the autumnal cups of which we collect the saffron; and forming a narrow path of such turf as I can find there, or rather following it as it creeps among the bays and hazels and sweet-briar, which have fallen at different times from the summit, and are now grown old, with an infinity of primroses at the roots. There are nowhere twenty steps without a projection and a turn, nor in any ten together is the chasm of the same width or figure. Hence the ascent in its windings is easy and imperceptible quite to the termination, where the rocks are somewhat high and precipitous: at the entrance they lose themselves in privet and elder, and you must make your way between them through the canes. Do not you remember where I carried you both across the muddy hollow in the footpath?

Ternissa. Leontion does.

Epicurus. That place is always wet; not only in this month of Puanepsion,[1] which we are beginning to-day, but in midsummer. The water that causes it, comes out a little way above it, but originates from the crevice, which I will cover at top with rose-laurel and mountain ash, with clematis and vine; and I will intercept the little

[1] The Attic month of Puanepsion had its commencement in the latter days of October: its name is derived from πύανα, the legumes which were offered in sacrifice to Apollo at that season.

rill in its wandering, draw it from its concealment, and place it like Bacchus under the protection of the Nymphs, who will smile upon it in its marble cradle, which at present I keep at home.

Ternissa. Leontion! why do you turn away your face? have the Nymphs smiled upon you in it?

Leontion. I bathed in it once, if you must know, Ternissa! Why now, Ternissa, why do you turn away yours? have the Nymphs frowned upon you for invading their secrets?

Ternissa. Epicurus, you are in the right to bring it away from Athens; from under the eye of Pallas: she might be angry.

Epicurus. You approve of its removal then, my lovely friend?

Ternissa. Mightily.

(*Aside.*) I wish it may break in pieces on the road.

Epicurus. What did you say?

Ternissa. I wish it were now on the road . . that I might try whether it would hold me . . I mean with my clothes on.

Epicurus. It would hold you, and one a span longer. I have another in the house; but it is not decorated with Fauns and Satyrs and foliage, like this.

Leontion. I remember putting my hand upon the frightful Satyr's head, to leap in: it seems made for the purpose. But the sculptor needed not to place the Naiad quite so near: he must have been a very impudent man: it is impossible to look for a moment at such a piece of workmanship.

Ternissa. For shame! Leontion! . . why, what was it? I do not desire to know.

Epicurus. I don't remember it.

Leontion. Nor I neither; only the head.

Epicurus. I shall place the Satyr toward the rock, that you may never see him, Ternissa.

Ternissa. Very right; he cannot turn round.

Leontion. The poor Naiad had done it, in vain.

Ternissa. All these labourers will soon finish the plantation, if you superintend them, and are not appointed to some magistrature.

Epicurus. Those who govern us are pleased at seeing a philosopher out of the city, and more still at finding, in a season of scarcity, forty poor citizens, who might become seditious, made happy and quiet by such employment.

Two evils, of almost equal weight, may befall the man of erudition: never to be listened to, and to be listened to always. Aware of these, I devote a large portion of my time and labours to the cultivation of such minds as flourish best in cities, where my garden at the gate, although smaller than this, we find sufficiently capacious. There I secure my listeners: here my thoughts and imaginations have their free natural current, and tarry or wander as the will invites: may it ever be among those dearest to me! those whose hearts possess the rarest and divinest faculty, of retaining or forgetting at option what ought to be forgotten or retained.

Leontion. The whole ground then will be covered with trees and shrubs.

Epicurus. There are some protuberances in various parts of the eminence, which you do not perceive till you are upon them or above them. They are almost level at the top, and overgrown with fine grass; for they catch the better soil,

brought down in small quantities by the rains. These are to be left unplanted ; so is the platform under the pinasters, whence there is a prospect of the city, the harbour, the isle of Salamis, and the territory of Megara. 'What then,' cried Sosimenes, 'you would hide from your view my young olives, and the whole length of the new wall I have been building at my own expense between us ! and, when you might see at once the whole of Attica, you will hardly see more of it than I could buy.'

Leontion. I do not perceive the new wall, for which Sosimenes, no doubt, thinks himself another Pericles.

Epicurus. Those old junipers quite conceal it.

Ternissa. They look warm and sheltering : but I like the rose-laurels much better ; and what a thicket of them there is !

Epicurus. Leaving all the larger, I shall remove many thousands of them ; enough to border the greater part of the walk, intermixed with roses.

Ternissa. Do, pray, leave that taller plant yonder, of which I see there are several springing in several places out of the rock : it appears to have produced on a single stem a long succession of yellow flowers ; some darkening and fading, others running up and leaving them behind, others showing their little faces imperfectly through their light green veils.

Leontion. Childish girl ! she means the mullen ; and she talks about it as she would have talked about a doll, attributing to it feelings and aims and designs. I saw her stay behind to kiss it ; no doubt, for being so nearly of her own height.

Ternissa. No indeed, not for that ; but because

I had broken off one of its blossoms unheedingly, perhaps the last it may bear, and because its leaves are so downy and pliant; and because nearer the earth some droop and are decaying, and remind me of a parent who must die before the tenderest of her children can do without her.

Epicurus. I will preserve the whole species; but you must point out to me the particular one as we return. There is an infinity of other plants and flowers, or weeds as Sosimenes calls them, of which he has cleared his olive-yard, and which I shall adopt. Twenty of his slaves came in yesterday, laden with hyacinths and narcissuses, anemones and jonquils. 'The curses of our vineyards,' cried he, 'and good neither for man nor beast. I have another estate infested with lilies of the valley: I should not wonder if you accepted these too.'

'And with thanks,' answered I.

The whole of his remark I could not collect: he turned aside, and (I believe) prayed. I only heard 'Pallas' . . 'father' . . 'sound mind' . . 'inoffensive man' . . 'good neighbour'. As we walked together, I perceived him looking grave, and I could not resist my inclination to smile as I turned my eyes toward him. He observed it, at first with unconcern, but by degrees some doubts arose within him, and he said, 'Epicurus, you have been throwing away no less than half a talent on this sorry piece of mountain, and I fear you are about to waste as much in labour: for nothing was ever so terrible as the price we are obliged to pay the workman, since the conquest of Persia, and the increase of luxury in our city. Under three obols none will do his day's work. But

what, in the name of all the deities, could induce you to plant those roots, which other people dig up and throw away?'

'I have been doing', said I, 'the same thing my whole life through, Sosimenes!'

'How!' cried he: 'I never knew that.'

'Those very doctrines', added I, 'which others hate and extirpate, I inculcate and cherish. They bring no riches, and therefore are thought to bring no advantage: to me they appear the more advantageous for that reason. They give us immediately what we solicit through the means of wealth. We toil for the wealth first; and then it remains to be proved whether we can purchase with it what we look for. Now, to carry our money to the market, and not to find in the market our money's worth, is great vexation: yet much greater has already preceded, in running up and down for it among so many competitors, and through so many thieves.'

After a while he rejoined, 'You really, then, have not overreached me?'

'In what? my friend!' said I.

'These roots', he answered, 'may perhaps be good and saleable for some purpose. Shall you send them into Persia? or whither?'

'Sosimenes! I shall make love-potions of the flowers.'

Leontion. O Epicurus! should it ever be known in Athens that they are good for this, you will not have, with all your fences of prunes and pomegranates, and precipices with gorse upon them, a single root left under ground after the month of Elaphebolion.[1]

[1] The thirtieth of Elaphebolion was the tenth of April.

Epicurus. It is not every one that knows the preparation.

Leontion. Everybody will try.

Epicurus. And you too, Ternissa ?

Ternissa. Will you teach me ?

Epicurus. This, and anything else I know. We must walk together when they are in flower.

Ternissa. And can you teach me then ?

Epicurus. I teach by degrees.

Leontion. By very slow ones, Epicurus ! I have no patience with you : tell us directly.

Epicurus. It is very material what kind of recipient you bring with you. Enchantresses use a brazen one : silver and gold are employed in other arts.

Leontion. I will bring any.

Ternissa. My mother has a fine golden one : she will lend it me : she allows me everything.

Epicurus. Leontion and Ternissa ! those eyes of yours brighten at inquiry, as if they carried a light within them for a guidance.

Leontion. No flattery !

Ternissa. No flattery ! come, teach us.

Epicurus. Will you hear me through in silence ?

Leontion. We promise.

Epicurus. Sweet girls ! the calm pleasures, such as I hope you will ever find in your walks among these gardens, will improve your beauty, animate your discourse, and correct the little that may hereafter rise up for correction in your dispositions. The smiling ideas left in our bosoms from our infancy, that many plants are the favourites of the gods, and that others were even the objects of their love, having once been invested with the human form, beautiful and lively and happy as

yourselves, give them an interest beyond the vision; yes, and a station, let me say it, on the vestibule of our affections. Resign your ingenuous hearts to simple pleasures; and there is none in man, where men are Attic, that will not follow and outstrip their movements.

Ternissa. O Epicurus!

Epicurus. What said Ternissa?

Leontion. Some of those anemones, I do think, must be still in blossom. Ternissa's golden cup is at home; but she has brought with her a little vase for the filter . . and has filled it to the brim . . . Do not hide your head behind my shoulder, Ternissa! no, nor in my lap.

Epicurus. Yes, there let it lie, the lovelier for that tendril of sunny brown hair upon it. How it falls and rises! Which is the hair? which the shadow?

Leontion. Let the hair rest.

Epicurus. I must not perhaps clasp the shadow!

Leontion. You philosophers are fond of such unsubstantial things. O! you have taken my volume. This is deceit.

You live so little in public, and entertain such a contempt for opinion, as to be both indifferent and ignorant what it is that people blame you for.

Epicurus. I know what it is I should blame myself for, if I attended to them. Prove them to be wiser and more disinterested in their wisdom than I am, and I will then go down to them and listen to them. When I have well considered a thing, I deliver it, regardless of what those think who neither take the time nor possess the faculty of considering anything well, and who have always lived far remote from the scope of our speculations.

Leontion. In the volume you snatched away from me so slyly, I have defended a position of yours which many philosophers turn into ridicule; namely, that politeness is among the virtues. I wish you yourself had spoken more at large upon the subject.

Epicurus. It is one upon which a lady is likely to display more ingenuity and discernment. If philosophers have ridiculed my sentiment, the reason is, it is among those virtues which in general they find most difficult to assume or counterfeit.

Leontion. Surely life runs on the smoother for this equability and polish; and the gratification it affords is more extensive than is afforded even by the highest virtue. Courage, on nearly all occasions, inflicts as much of evil as it imparts of good. It may be exerted in defence of our country, in defence of those who love us, in defence of the harmless and the helpless: but those against whom it is thus exerted may possess an equal share of it. If they succeed, then manifestly the ill it produces is greater than the benefit: if they succumb, it is nearly as great. For, many of their adversaries are first killed and maimed, and many of their own kindred are left to lament the consequences of their aggression.

Epicurus. You have spoken first of courage, as that virtue which attracts your sex principally.

Ternissa. Not me; I am always afraid of it. I love those best who can tell me the most things I never knew before, and who have patience with me, and look kindly while they teach me, and almost as if they were waiting for fresh questions. Now let me hear directly what you were about to say to Leontion.

Epicurus. I was proceeding to remark that temperance comes next; and temperance has then its highest merit when it is the support of civility and politeness. So that I think I am right and equitable in attributing to politeness a distinguished rank, not among the ornaments of life, but among the virtues. And you, Leontion and Ternissa, will have leaned the more propensely toward this opinion, if you considered, as I am sure you did, that the peace and concord of families, friends, and cities, are preserved by it: in other terms, the harmony of the world.

Ternissa. Leontion spoke of courage, you of temperance: the next great virtue, in the division made by the philosophers, is justice.

Epicurus. Temperance includes it: for temperance is imperfect if it is only an abstinence from too much food, too much wine, too much conviviality, or other luxury. It indicates every kind of forbearance. Justice is forbearance from what belongs to another. Giving to this one rightly what that one would hold wrongfully, is justice in magistrature, not in the abstract, and is only a part of its office. The perfectly temperate man is also the perfectly just man: but the perfectly just man (as philosophers now define him) may not be the perfectly temperate one: I include the less in the greater.

Leontion. We hear of judges, and upright ones too, being immoderate eaters and drinkers.

Epicurus. The Lacedemonians are temperate in food and courageous in battle: but men like these, if they existed in sufficient numbers, would devastate the universe. We alone, we Athenians, with less military skill perhaps, and certainly less

rigid abstinence from voluptuousness and luxury, have set before it the only grand example of social government and of polished life. From us the seed is scattered: from us flow the streams that irrigate it: and ours are the hands, O Leontion! that collect it, cleanse it, deposit it, and convey and distribute it sound and weighty through every race and age. Exhausted as we are by war, we can do nothing better than lie down and doze while the weather is fine overhead, and dream (if we can) that we are affluent and free.

O sweet sea-air! how bland art thou and refreshing! Breathe upon Leontion! breathe upon Ternissa! bring them health and spirits and serenity, many springs and many summers, and when the vine-leaves have reddened and rustle under their feet.

These, my beloved girls, are the children of Eternity: they played around Theseus and the beauteous Amazon, they gave to Pallas the bloom of Venus, and to Venus the animation of Pallas. Is it not better to enjoy by the hour their soft salubrious influence, than to catch by fits the rancid breath of demagogues; than to swell and move under it without or against our will; than to acquire the semblance of eloquence by the bitterness of passion, the tone of philosophy by disappointment, or the credit of prudence by distrust? Can fortune, can industry, can desert itself, bestow on us anything we have not here?

Leontion. And when shall those three meet? The gods have never united them, knowing that men would put them asunder at their first appearance.

Epicurus. I am glad to leave the city as often as possible, full as it is of high and glorious reminiscences, and am inclined much rather to indulge in quieter scenes, whither the Graces and Friendship lead me. I would not contend even with men able to contend with me. You, Leontion, I see, think differently, and have composed at last your long-meditated work against the philosophy of Theophrastus.

Leontion. Why not ? he has been praised above his merits.

Epicurus. My Leontion ! you have inadvertently given me the reason and origin of all controversial writings. They flow not from a love of truth or a regard for science, but from envy and ill will. Setting aside the evil of malignity, always hurtful to ourselves, not always to others, there is weakness in the argument you have adduced. When a writer is praised above his merits in his own times, he is certain of being estimated below them in the times succeeding. Paradox is dear to most people : it bears the appearance of originality, but is usually the talent of the superficial, the perverse, and the obstinate.

Nothing is more gratifying than the attention you are bestowing on me, which you always apportion to the seriousness of my observations. But, Leontion ! Leontion ! you defend me too earnestly. The roses on your cheeks should derive their bloom from a cooler and sweeter and more salubrious fountain. In what mythology (can you tell me, Ternissa ?) is Friendship the mother of Anger ?

Ternissa. I can only tell you that Love lights Anger's torch very often.

Leontion. I dislike Theophrastus for his affected contempt of your doctrines.

Epicurus. Unreasonably, for the contempt of them; reasonably, if affected. Good men may differ widely from me, and wise ones misunderstand me; for, their wisdom having raised up to them schools of their own, they have not found leisure to converse with me; and from others they have received a partial and inexact report. My opinion is, that certain things are indifferent, and unworthy of pursuit or attention, as lying beyond our research and almost our conjecture; which things the generality of philosophers (for the generality are speculative) deem of the first importance. Questions relating to them I answer evasively, or altogether decline. Again, there are modes of living which are suitable to some and unsuitable to others. What I myself follow and embrace, what I recommend to the studious, to the irritable, to the weak in health, would ill agree with the commonality of citizens. Yet my adversaries cry out, 'Such is the opinion and practice of Epicurus.' For instance, I have never taken a wife, and never will take one: but he from among the mass who should avow his imitation of my example, would act as wisely and more religiously in saying that he chose celibacy because Pallas had done the same.

Leontion. If Pallas had many such votaries she would soon have few citizens.

Epicurus. And extremely bad ones if all followed me in retiring from the offices of magistracy and of war. Having seen that the most sensible men are the most unhappy, I could not but examine the causes of it: and finding that the

same sensibility to which they are indebted for the activity of their intellect, is also the restless mover of their jealousy and ambition, I would lead them aside from whatever operates upon these, and throw under their feet the terrors their imagination has created. My philosophy is not for the populace nor for the proud: the ferocious will never attain it: the gentle will embrace it, but will not call it mine. I do not desire that they should: let them rest their heads upon that part of the pillow which they find the softest, and enjoy their own dreams unbroken.

Leontion. The old are all against you: for the name of pleasure is an affront to them: they know no other kind of it than that which has flowered and seeded, and of which the withered stems have indeed a rueful look. What we call dry they call sound: nothing must retain any juice in it: their pleasure is in chewing what is hard, not in tasting what is savoury.

Epicurus. Unhappily the aged are retentive of long-acquired maxims, and insensible to new impressions, whether from fancy or from truth: in fact, their eyes blend the two together. Well might the poet tell us,

> Fewer the gifts that gnarled Age presents
> To elegantly-handled Infancy,
> Than elegantly-handled Infancy
> Presents to gnarled Age. From both they drop;
> The middle course of life receives them all,
> Save the light few that laughing Youth runs off with,
> Unvalued as a mistress or a flower.

Leontion. It is reported by the experienced that our last loves and our first are of equal interest to us.

Ternissa. Surely they are. What is the difference? Can you really mean to say, O Leontion, that there are any intermediate? Why do you look aside? And you, too, refuse to answer me so easy and plain a question?

Leontion to Epicurus. Although you teach us the necessity of laying a strong hand on the strong affections, you never pull one feather from the wing of Love.

Epicurus. I am not so irreligious.

Ternissa. I think he could only twitch it just enough to make the gentle god turn round, and smile on him.

Leontion. You know little about the matter, but may live to know all. Whatever we may talk of torments, as some do, there must surely be more pleasure in desiring and not possessing, than in possessing and not desiring.

Epicurus. Perhaps so: but consult the intelligent. Certainly there is a middle state between love and friendship, more delightful than either, but more difficult to remain in.

Leontion. To be preferred to all others is the supremacy of bliss. Do not you think so, Ternissa?

Ternissa. It is indeed what the wise and the powerful and the beautiful chiefly aim at: Leontion has attained it.

Epicurus. Delightful, no doubt, is such supremacy: but far more delightful is the certainty that there never was any one quite near enough to be given up for us. To be preferred is hardly a compensation for having been long compared. The breath of another's sigh bedims and hangs pertinaciously about the image we adore.

Leontion. When Friendship has taken the place

of Love, she ought to make his absence as little a cause of regret as possible, and it is gracious in her to imitate his demeanour and his words.

Epicurus. I can repeat them more easily than imitate them.

Ternissa. Both of you, until this moment, were looking grave; but Leontion has resumed her smiles again on hearing what Epicurus can do. I wish you would repeat to me, O Epicurus, any words so benign a God hath vouchsafed to teach you; for it would be a convincing proof of your piety, and I would silence the noisiest tongue in Athens with it.

Leontion. Simpleton! we were speaking allegorically.

Ternissa. Never say that: I do believe the God himself hath conversed with Epicurus. Tell me now, Epicurus, tell me yourself, has not he?

Epicurus. Yes.

Ternissa. In his own form?

Epicurus. Very nearly: it was in Ternissa's.

Ternissa. Impious man! I am ashamed of you.

Leontion. Never did shame burn brighter.

Ternissa. Mind Theophrastus, not me.

Leontion. Since, in obedience to your institutions, O Epicurus, I must not say I am angry, I am offended at least with Theophrastus, for having so misrepresented your opinions, on the necessity of keeping the mind composed and tranquil, and remote from every object and every sentiment by which a painful sympathy may be excited. In order to display his elegance of language, he runs wherever he can lay a censure on you, whether he believes in its equity or not.

Epicurus. This is the case with all eloquent men

and all disputants. Truth neither warms nor elevates them, neither obtains for them profit nor applause.

Ternissa. I have heard wise remarks very often and very warmly praised.

Epicurus. Not for the truth in them, but for the grace, or because they touched the spring of some preconception or some passion. Man is a hater of truth, a lover of fiction.

Leontion. How then happens it that children, when you have related to them any story which has greatly interested them, ask immediately and impatiently, *is it true?*

Epicurus. Children are not men nor women: they are almost as different creatures, in many respects, as if they never were to be the one or the other: they are as unlike as buds are unlike flowers, and almost as blossoms are unlike fruits. Greatly are they better than they are about to be, unless Philosophy raises her hand above them when the noon is coming on, and shelters them at one season from the heats that would scorch and wither, and at another from the storms that would shatter and subvert them. There are nations, it is reported, which aim their arrows and javelins at the sun and moon, on occasions of eclipse, or any other offence: but I never have heard that the sun and moon abated their course through the heavens for it, or looked more angrily when they issued forth again to shed light on their antagonists. They went onward all the while in their own serenity and clearness, through unobstructed paths, without diminution and without delay: it was only the little world below that was in darkness. Philosophy lets her light descend and enter wherever there is a passage for

it: she takes advantage of the smallest crevice, but the rays are rebutted by the smallest obstruction. Polemics can never be philosophers or philotheists: they serve men ill, and their gods no better: they mar what is solid in earthly bliss by animosities and dissensions, and intercept the span of azure at which the weary and the sorrowful would look up.

Theophrastus is a writer of many acquirements and some shrewdness, usually judicious, often somewhat witty, always elegant: his thoughts are never confused, his sentences are never incomprehensible. If Aristoteles thought more highly of him than his due, surely you ought not to censure Theophrastus with severity on the supposition of his rating me below mine; unless you argue that a slight error in a short sum is less pardonable than in a longer. Had Aristoteles been living, and had he given the same opinion of me, your friendship and perhaps my self-love might have been wounded; for, if on one occasion he spoke too favourably, he never spoke unfavourably but with justice. This is among the indications of orderly and elevated minds; and here stands the barrier that separates them from the common and the waste. Is a man to be angry because an infant is fretful? Is a philosopher to unpack and throw away his philosophy, because an idiot has tried to overturn it on the road, and has pursued it with jibes and ribaldry?

Leontion. Theophrastus would persuade us that, according to your system, we not only should decline the succour of the wretched, but avoid the sympathies that poets and historians would awaken in us. Probably for the sake of introducing some

idle verses, written by a friend of his, he says that, following the guidance of Epicurus, we should altogether shun the theatre, and not only when *Prometheus* and *Oedipus* and *Philoctetes* are introduced, but even where generous and kindly sentiments are predominant, if they partake of that tenderness which belongs to pity. I know not what Thracian lord recovers his daughter from her ravisher: such are among the words they exchange.

Father.

Insects, that dwell in rotten reeds, inert
Upon the surface of a stream or pool,
Then rush into the air on meshy vans,
Are not so different in their varying lives
As we are . . O! what father on this earth,
Holding his child's cool cheek within his palms
And kissing his fair front, would wish him man
Inheritor of wants and jealousies,
Of labour, of ambition, of distress,
And, cruellest of all the passions, lust.
Who that beholds me, persecuted, scorned,
A wanderer, e'er could think what friends were mine,
How numerous, how devoted! with what glee
Smiled my old house, with what acclaim my courts
Rang from without whene'er my war-horse neighed.

Daughter.

Thy fortieth birthday is not shouted yet
By the young peasantry, with rural gifts
And nightly fires along the pointed hills,
Yet do thy temples glitter with grey hair
Scattered not thinly: ah! what sudden change!
Only thy voice and heart remain the same:
No, that voice trembles, and that heart (I feel)
While it would comfort and console me, breaks.

Epicurus. I would never close my bosom against the feelings of humanity: but I would calmly and well consider by what conduct of life they may

enter it with the least importunity and violence. A consciousness that we have promoted the happiness of others, to the uttermost of our power, is certain not only to meet them at the threshold, but to bring them along with us, and to render them accurate and faithful prompters, when we bend perplexedly over the problem of evil figured by the tragedians. If indeed there were more of pain than of pleasure in the exhibitions of the dramatist, no man in his senses would attend them twice. All the imitative arts have delight for the principal object: the first of these is poetry: the highest of poetry is tragic.

Leontion. The epic has been called so.

Epicurus. Improperly; for the epic has much more in it of what is prosaic. Its magnitude is no argument. An Egyptian pyramid contains more materials than an Ionic temple, but requires less contrivance, and exhibits less beauty of design. My simile is yet a defective one; for, a tragedy must be carried on with an unbroken interest; and, undecorated by loose foliage or fantastic branches, it must rise, like the palm-tree, with a lofty unity. On these matters I am unable to argue at large, or perhaps correctly: on those however which I have studied and treated, my terms are so explicit and clear, that Theophrastus can never have misunderstood them. Let me recall to your attention but two axioms.

Abstinence from low pleasures is the only means of meriting or of obtaining the higher.

Kindness in us is the honey that blunts the sting of unkindness in another.

Leontion. Explain to me then, O Epicurus, why we suffer so much from ingratitude.

Epicurus. We fancy we suffer from ingratitude, while in reality we suffer from self-love. Passion weeps while she says, 'I did not deserve this from him:' Reason, while she says it, smoothens her brow at the clear fountain of the heart. Permit me also, like Theophrastus, to borrow a few words from a poet.

Ternissa. Borrow as many such as any one will entrust to you; and may Hermes prosper your commerce! Leontion may go to the theatre then; for she loves it.

Epicurus. Girls! be the bosom friends of *Antigone* and *Ismene;* and you shall enter the wood of the Eumenides without shuddering, and leave it without the trace of a tear. Never did you appear so graceful to me, O Ternissa; no, not even after this walk do you; as when I saw you blow a fly from the forehead of *Philoctetes* in the propylëa. The wing, with which Sophocles and the statuary represent him, to drive away the summer insects in his agony, had wearied his flaccid arm, hanging down beside him.

Ternissa. Do you imagine then I thought him a living man?

Epicurus. The sentiment was both more delicate and more august from being indistinct. You would have done it, even if he *had* been a living man: even if he could have clasped you in his arms, imploring the Deities to resemble you in gentleness, you would have done it.

Ternissa. He looked so abandoned by all, and so heroic, yet so feeble and so helpless; I did not think of turning round to see if any one was near me; or else perhaps . . .

Epicurus. If you could have thought of looking

round, you would no longer have been Ternissa. The Gods would have transformed you for it into some tree.

Leontion. And Epicurus had been walking under it this day, perhaps.

Epicurus. With Leontion, the partner of his sentiments. But the walk would have been earlier or later than the present hour: since the middle of the day, like the middle of fruits, is good for nothing.

Leontion. For dinner surely.

Epicurus. Dinner is a less gratification to me than to many: I dine alone.

Ternissa. Why?

Epicurus. To avoid the noise, the heat, and the intermixture both of odours and of occupations. I cannot bear the indecency of speaking with a mouth in which there is food. I careen my body (since it is always in want of repair) in as unobstructed a space as I can, and I lie down and sleep awhile when the work is over.

Leontion. Epicurus! although it would be very interesting, no doubt, to hear more of what you do after dinner . . . (*aside to him*) now don't smile: I shall never forgive you if you say a single word . . . yet I would rather hear a little about the theatre, and whether you think at last that women should frequent it; for you have often said the contrary.

Epicurus. I think they should visit it rarely; not because it excites their affections, but because it deadens them. To me nothing is so odious as to be at once among the rabble and among the heroes, and, while I am receiving into my heart the most exquisite of human sensations, to feel

upon my shoulder the hand of some inattentive and insensible young officer.

Leontion. O very bad indeed! horrible!

Ternissa. You quite fire at the idea.

Leontion. Not I: I don't care about it.

Ternissa. Not about what is very bad indeed? quite horrible?

Leontion. I seldom go thither.

Epicurus. The theatre is delightful when we erect it in our own house or arbour, and when there is but one spectator.

Leontion. You must lose the illusion in great part, if you only read the tragedy, which I fancy to be your meaning.

Epicurus. I lose the less of it. Do not imagine that the illusion is, or can be, or ought to be, complete. If it were possible, no Phalaris or Perillus could devise a crueller torture. Here are two imitations: first, the poet's of the sufferer; secondly, the actor's of both: poetry is superinduced. No man in pain ever uttered the better part of the language used by Sophocles. We admit it, and willingly, and are at least as much illuded by it as by anything else we hear or see upon the stage. Poets and statuaries and painters give us an adorned imitation of the object, so skilfully treated that we receive it for a correct one. This is the only illusion they aim at: this is the perfection of their arts.

Leontion. Do you derive no pleasure from the representation of a consummate actor?

Epicurus. High pleasure; but liable to be overturned in an instant; pleasure at the mercy of any one who sits beside me. Rarely does it happen that an Athenian utters a syllable in the

midst of it: but our city is open to the inhabitants of all the world, and all the world that is yet humanized a woman might walk across in sixty hours. There are even in Greece a few remaining still so barbarous, that I have heard them whisper in the midst of the finest scenes of our greatest poets.

Leontion. Acorn-fed Chaonians!

Epicurus. I esteem all the wise; but I entertain no wish to imitate all of them in everything. What was convenient and befitting in one or other of them, might be inconvenient and unbefitting in me. Great names ought to bear us up and carry us through, but never to run away with us. Peculiarity and solitariness give an idea to weak minds of something grand, authoritative, and godlike. To be wise indeed and happy and self-possessed, we must often be alone: we must mix as little as we can with what is called society, and abstain rather more than seems desirable even from the better few.

Ternissa. You have commanded us at all times to ask you anything we do not understand: why then use the phrase 'what is called society'? as if there could be a doubt whether we are in society when we converse with many.

Epicurus. We may meet and converse with thousands: you and Leontion and myself could associate with few. *Society*, in the philosophical sense of the word, is almost the contrary of what it is in the common acceptation.

Leontion. Now go on with your discourse.

Epicurus. When we have once acquired that intelligence of which we have been in pursuit, we may relax our minds, and lay the produce of our chase at the feet of those we love.

Leontion. Philosophers seem to imagine that they can be visible and invisible at will; that they can be admired for the display of their tenets, and unobserved in the workings of their spleen. None of those whom I remember, or whose writings I have perused, was quite exempt from it. Among the least malicious is Theophrastus: could he find no other for so little malice but you?

Epicurus. The origin of his dislike to me, was my opinion that perspicuity is the prime excellence of composition. He and Aristoteles and Plato talk diffusely of attending to harmony, and clap rhetorical rules before our mouths in order to produce it. Natural sequences and right subordination of thoughts, and that just proportion of numbers in the sentences which follows a strong conception, are the constituents of true harmony. You are satisfied with it and dwell upon it; which you would vainly hope to do when you are forced to turn back again to seize an idea or to comprehend a period. Let us believe that opposition, and even hard words, are (at least in the beginning) no certain proofs of hatred; although, by requiring defence, they soon produce heat and animosity in him who hath engaged in so unwise a warface. On the other hand, praises are not always the unfailing signs of liberality or of justice. Many are extolled out of enmity to others, and perhaps would have been decried had those others not existed. Among the causes of my happiness, this is one: I never have been stimulated to hostility by any in the crowd that has assailed me. If in my youth I had been hurried into this weakness, I should have regretted it as lost time, lost pleasure, lost humanity.

Leontion. We may expose what is violent or false in any one; and chiefly in any one who injures us or our friends.

Epicurus. We may.

Leontion. How then?

Epicurus. By exhibiting in ourselves the contrary. Such vengeance is legitimate and complete. I found in my early days, among the celebrated philosophers of Greece, a love of domination, a propensity to imposture, a jealousy of renown, and a cold indifference to simple truth. None of these qualities lead to happiness; none of them stand within the precincts of Virtue. I asked myself, 'What is the most natural and the most universal of our desires:' I found it was, *to be happy.* Wonderful I thought it, that the gratification of a desire which is at once the most universal and the most natural, should be the seldomest attained. I then conjectured the means; and I found that they vary, as vary the minds and capacities of men; that, however, the principal one lay in the avoidance of those very things which had hitherto been taken up as the instruments of enjoyment and content; such as military commands, political offices, clients, hazardous ventures in commerce, and extensive property in land.

Leontion. And yet offices, both political and military, must be undertaken; and clients will throng about those who exercise them. Commerce too will dilate with Prosperity, and Frugality will square her farm by lopping off the angles of the next.

Epicurus. True, Leontion! nor is there a probability that my opinions will pervade the heart

of Avarice or Ambition: they will influence only the unoccupied. Philosophy hath led scarcely a single man away from commands or magistracies, until he had first tried them. Weariness is the repose of the politician, and apathy his wisdom. He fancies that nations are contemplating the great man in his retirement, while what began in ignorance of himself is ending in forgetfulness on the part of others. This truth at last appears to him: he detests the ingratitude of mankind: he declares his resolution to carry the earth no longer on his shoulders: he is taken at his word: and the shock of it breaks his heart.

Ternissa. Epicurus, I have been listening to you with even more pleasure than usual, for you often talk of love, and such other things as you can know nothing about: but now you have gone out of your way to defend an enemy, and to lead aside Leontion from her severity to Theophrastus.

Epicurus. Believe me, my lovely friends, he is no ordinary man who hath said one wise thing gracefully in the whole of his existence: now several such are recorded of him whom Leontion hath singled out from my assailants. His style is excellent.

Leontion. The excellence of it hath been exaggerated by Aristoteles, to lower our opinion of Plato's.

Epicurus. It may be: I cannot prove it, and never heard it.

Leontion. So blinded indeed is this great master of rhetoric . . .

Epicurus. Pardon the rudeness of my interruption, dear Leontion. Do not designate so great a man by a title so contemptible. You are as

nearly as humiliating to his genius as those who call him the Stagyrite: and those are ignorant of the wrong they do him: many of them are his disciples and admirers, and call him by that name in quoting his authority. Philosophy, until he came among us, was like the habitations of the Troglodytes; vast indeed and wonderful, but without construction, without arrangement: he first gave it order and system. I do not rank him with Democritus, who has been to philosophers what Homer has been to poets, and who is equally great in imagination and in reflection: but no other has left behind him so many just remarks on such a variety of subjects.

Within one olympiad three men have departed from the world, who carried farther than any other three that ever dwelt upon it, reason, eloquence, and martial glory; Aristoteles, Demosthenes, and Alexander. Now tell me which of these qualities do you admire the most?

Leontion. Reason.

Epicurus. And rightly. Among the three characters, the vulgar and ignorant will prefer Alexander; the less vulgar and ignorant will prefer Demosthenes; and they who are removed to the greatest distance from ignorance and vulgarity, Aristoteles. Yet, although he has written on some occasions with as much purity and precision as we find in the *Orations* of Pericles, many things are expressed obscurely; which is by much the greatest fault in composition.

Leontion. Surely you do not say that an obscurity is worse than a defect in grammar.

Epicurus. I do say it: for we may discover a truth through such a defect, which we cannot

through an obscurity. It is better to find the object of our researches in ill condition than not to find it at all. We may purify the idea in our own bath, and adorn it with our own habiliments, if we can but find it, though among the slaves or clowns: whereas, if it is locked up from us in a dark chamber at the top of the house, we have only to walk downstairs again, disappointed, tired, and out of humour.

But you were saying that something had blinded the philosopher.

Leontion. His zeal and partiality. Not only did he prefer Theophrastus to every one who taught at Athens; not only did he change his original name, for one of so high an import as to signify that he would elevate his language to the language of the gods; but he fancied and insisted that the very sound of *Theophrastus* is sweet,[1] of *Tyrtamus* harsh and inelegant.

Epicurus. Your ear, Leontion, is the better arbitress of musical sounds, in which (I speak of words) hardly any two agree. But a box on the ear does not improve the organ; and I would advise you to leave inviolate and untouched all those peculiarities which rest on friendship. The jealous, if we suffered them in the least to move us, would deserve our commiseration rather than our resentment: but the best thing we can do with them is to make them the comedians of our privacy. Some have recently started up among us, who, when they have published to the world

[1] Τύρταμος δ' ἐκαλεῖτο πρότερον ὁ Θεόφραστος, μετωνόμασε δ' αὐτὸν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης Θεόφραστον· ἅμα μὲν φεύγων τὴν τοῦ προτέρου ὀνόματος κακοφωνίαν, ἅμα δὲ τὸν τῆς φράσεως αὐτοῦ ἦλον ἐπισημαινόμενος. Strabo xiii.

their systems of philosophy, or their axioms, or their paradoxes, and find nevertheless that others are preferred to them, persuade their friends and scholars that enormous and horrible injustice has been done toward them. By degrees they cool, however, and become more reasonable: they resign the honour of invention, which always may be contested or ascertained, and invest themselves with what they style much greater, that of learning. What constitutes this glory, on which they plume themselves so joyously and gaudily? Nothing else than the reading of those volumes which we have taken the trouble to write. A multitude of authors, the greater part of them inferior in abilities to you who hear me, are the slow constructors of reputations which they would persuade us are the solidest and the highest. We teach them all they know: and they are as proud as if they had taught us. There are not indeed many of these parasitical plants at present, sucking us, and resting their leafy slenderness upon us: but whenever books become more numerous, a new species will arise from them, to which philosophers and historians and poets must give way, for, intercepting all above, it will approximate much nearer to the manners and intellects of the people. At last what is most Attic in Athens will be canvassed and discussed in their booths; and he who now exerciseth a sound and strong judgement of his own, will indifferently borrow theirs, and become so corrupted with it, as ever afterward to be gratified to his heart's content by the impudent laconism of their oracular decisions. These people are the natural enemies of greater: they cannot sell their platters of

offal while a richer feast is open to the public, and while lamps of profuser light announce the invitation. I would not augur the decay of philosophy and literature: it was retarded by the good example of our ancestors. The seven wise men, as they are called, lived amicably, and, where it was possible, in intercourse. Our seventy wiser (for we may reckon at least that number of those who proclaim themselves so) stand at the distance of a porcupine's shot, and, like that animal, scatter their shafts in every direction, with more profusion than force, and with more anger than aim.

Hither, to these banks of serpolet; to these strawberries, whose dying leaves breathe a most refreshing fragrance; to this ivy, from which Bacchus may have crowned himself; let us retire at the voice of Discord. Whom should we contend with? The less? it were inglorious. The greater? it were vain. Do we look for Truth? she is not the inhabitant of cities nor delights in clamour: she steals upon the calm and meditative as Diana upon Endymion, indulgent in her chastity, encouraging a modest, and requiting a faithful love.

Leontion. How Ternissa sighs after Truth!

Epicurus. If Truth appeared in daylight among mortals, she would surely resemble Ternissa. Those white and lucid cheeks, that youth which appears more youthful (for unless we are near her we think her yet a child), and that calm open forehead . . .

Leontion. Malicious girl! she conceals it!

Epicurus. Ingenious girl! the resemblance was, until now, imperfect. We must remove the veil ourselves; for Truth, whatever the poets may tell us, never comes without one, diaphanous or opaque.

If those who differ on speculative points, would walk together now and then in the country, they might find many objects that must unite them. The same bodily feeling is productive in some degree of the same mental one. Enjoyment from sun and air, from exercise and odours, brings hearts together that schools and council-chambers and popular assemblies have stood between for years.

I hope Theophrastus may live, to walk with us among these bushes when they are shadier, and to perceive that all questions, but those about the way to happiness, are illiberal or mechanical or infantine or idle.

Ternissa. Are geometry and astronomy idle ?

Epicurus. Such idleness as theirs a wise man may indulge in, when he has found what he was seeking ; and, as they abstract the mind from what would prey upon it, there are many to whom I would recommend them earlier, as their principal and most serious studies.

We will return to Theophrastus. He has one great merit in style ; he is select and sparing in the use of metaphors : that man sees badly who sees everything double. He wants novelty and vigour in his remarks both on men and things : neither his subject nor his mind is elevated : here however let me observe, my fair disciples, that he and some others, of whom we speak in common conversation with little deference or reserve, may perhaps attract the notice and attention of the remotest nations in the remotest times. Suppose him to have his defects (all that you or any one ever has supposed in him), yet how much greater is his intellect than the intellect of any among

those who govern the world! If these appeared in the streets of Athens, you would run to look at them, and ask your friends whether they had seen them pass. If you cannot show as much reverence to Theophrastus, the defect is yours. He may not be what his friends have fancied him: but how great must he be to have obtained the partiality of such friends! How few are greater! how many millions less!

Leontion. A slender tree, with scarcely any heart or pith in it, ought at least to have some play of boughs and branches: he, poor man, is inert. The leaves just twinkle, and nothing more.

Epicurus. He writes correctly and observantly. Even bad writers are blamed unjustly when they are blamed much. In comparison with many good and sensible men, they have evinced no slight degree of intelligence: yet we go frequently to those good and sensible men, and engage them to join us in our contempt and ridicule, of one who not only is wiser than they are, but who has made an effort to entertain or to instruct us, which they never did.

Ternissa. This is inconsiderate and ungrateful.

Epicurus. Truly and humanely have you spoken. Is it not remarkable that we are the fondest of acknowledging the least favourable and the least pleasurable of our partialities? Whether in hatred or love, men are disposed to bring their conversation very near the object, yet shrink at touching the fairer. In hatred their sensibility is less delicate, and the inference comes closer: in love they readily give an arm to a confidant, almost to the upper step of their treasury.

Leontion. How unworthy of trust do you repre-

sent your fellow men! But you began by censuring *me*. In my Treatise I have only defended your tenets against Theophrastus.

Epicurus. I am certain you have done it with spirit and eloquence, dear Leontion; and there are but two words in it I would wish you to erase.

Leontion. Which are they?

Epicurus. Theophrastus and Epicurus. If you love me, you will do nothing that may make you uneasy when you grow older; nothing that may allow my adversary to say, 'Leontion soon forgot her Epicurus.' My maxim is, never to defend my systems or paradoxes: if you undertake it, the Athenians will insist that I impelled you secretly, or that my philosophy and my friendship were ineffectual on you.

Leontion. They shall never say that.

Epicurus. I would entreat you to dismiss altogether things quite unworthy of your notice, if your observations could fall on any subject without embellishing it. You do not want these thorns to light your fire with.

Leontion. Pardon the weak arm that would have defended what none can reach.

Epicurus. I am not unmoved by the kindness of your intentions. Most people, and philosophers too among the rest, when their own conduct or opinions are questioned, are admirably prompt and dexterous in the science of defence; but when another's are assailed, they parry with as ill a grace and faltering a hand, as if they never had taken a lesson in it at home. Seldom will they see what they profess to look for; and, finding it, they pick up with it a thorn under the nail. They canter over the solid turf, and complain that there

is no corn upon it: they canter over the corn, and curse the ridges and furrows. All schools of philosophy, and almost all authors, are rather to be frequented for exercise than for freight: but this exercise ought to acquire us health and strength, spirits and good humour. There is none of them that does not supply some truth useful to every man, and some untruth equally so to the few that are able to wrestle with it. If there were no falsehood in the world, there would be no doubt; if there were no doubt, there would be no inquiry; if no inquiry, no wisdom, no knowledge, no genius; and Fancy herself would lie muffled up in her robe, inactive, pale, and bloated. I wish we could demonstrate the existence of utility in some other evils as easily as in this.

Leontion. My remarks on the conduct and on the style of Theophrastus are not confined to him solely. I have taken at last a general view of our literature, and traced as far as I am able its deviation and decline. In ancient works we sometimes see the mark of the chisel; in modern we might almost suppose that no chisel was employed at all, and that everything was done by grinding and rubbing. There is an ordinariness, an indistinctness, a generalisation, not even to be found in a flock of sheep. As most reduce what is sand into dust, the few that avoid it run to a contrary extreme, and would force us to believe that what is original must be unpolished and uncouth.

Epicurus. There have been in all ages, and in all there will be, sharp and slender heads, made purposely and peculiarly for creeping into the crevices of our nature. While we contemplate the magnificence of the universe, and mensurate

the fitness and adaptation of one part to another, the small philosopher hangs upon a hair or creeps within a wrinkle, and cries out shrilly from his elevation that we are blind and superficial. He discovers a wart, he pries into a pore, and he calls it knowledge of man. Poetry and criticism, and all the fine arts, have generated such living things, which not only will be co-existent with them, but will (I fear) survive them. Hence history takes alternately the form of reproval and of panegyric; and science in its pulverised state, in its shapeless and colourless atoms, assumes the name of metaphysics. We find no longer the rich succulence of Herodotus, no longer the strong filament of Thucydides, but thoughts fit only for the slave, and language for the rustic and the robber. These writings can never reach posterity, nor serve better authors near us: for who would receive as documents the perversions of venality and party? Alexander we know was intemperate, and Philip both intemperate and perfidious: we require not a volume of dissertation on the thread of history, to demonstrate that one or other left a tailor's bill unpaid, and the immorality of doing so; nor a supplement to ascertain on the best authorities which of the two it was. History should explain to us how nations rose and fell, what nurtured them in their growth, what sustained them in their maturity; not which orator ran swiftest through the crowd from the right hand to the left, which assassin was too strong for manacles, or which felon too opulent for crucifixion.

Leontion. It is better, I own it, that such writers should amuse our idleness than excite our spleen.

Ternissa. What is spleen?

Epicurus. Do not ask her; she cannot tell you. The spleen, Ternissa, is to the heart what Arimanes is to Oromazes.

Ternissa. I am little the wiser yet. Does he ever use such hard words with you?

Leontion. He means the evil Genius and the good Genius, in the theogony of the Persians; and would perhaps tell you, as he hath told me, that the heart in itself is free from evil, but very capable of receiving and too tenacious of holding it.

Epicurus. In our moral system, the spleen hangs about the heart and renders it sad and sorrowful, unless we continually keep it in exercise by kind offices, or in its proper place by serious investigation and solitary questionings. Otherwise it is apt to adhere and to accumulate, until it deadens the principles of sound action, and obscures the sight.

Ternissa. It must make us very ugly when we grow old.

Leontion. In youth it makes us uglier, as not appertaining to it: a little more or less ugliness in decrepitude is hardly worth considering, there being quite enough of it from other quarters: I would stop it here, however.

Ternissa. O what a thing is age!

Leontion. Death without death's quiet. But we will converse upon it when we know it better.

Epicurus. My beloved! we will converse upon it at the present hour, while the harshness of its features is indiscernible, not only to you, but even to me, who am much nearer to it. Disagreeable things, like disagreeable men, are never to be spoken of when they are present. Do we think,

as we may do in such a morning as this, that the air awakens the leaves around us only to fade and perish? Do we, what is certain, think that every note of music we ever heard, every voice that ever breathed into our bosoms, and played upon its instrument the heart, only wafted us on a little nearer to the tomb? Let the idea not sadden but compose us. Let us yield to it, just as season yields to season, hour to hour, and with a bright serenity, such as Evening is invested with by the departing Sun.

What! are the dews falling, Ternissa? Let them not yet, my lovely one!

Ternissa. You soothe me, but to afflict me after; you teach me, but to grieve.

Epicurus. At what just now?

Ternissa. You are many years in advance of us, and may leave us both behind.

Epicurus. Let not the fault be yours.

Leontion. How can it?

Epicurus. The heart, O Leontion! reflects a fuller and a fairer image of us than the eye can.

Ternissa. True, true, true!

Leontion. Yes; the heart recomposes the dust within the sepulchre, and evokes it; the eye too, even when it has lost its brightness, loses not the power of reproducing the object it delighted in. It sees amid the shades of night, like the gods.

Epicurus. Sobs, too! Ah, these can only be suppressed by force.

Leontion. By such! She will sob all day before she is corrected.

Ternissa. Loose me. Leontion makes me blush.

Leontion. I?

Ternissa. It was you then, false Epicurus!

Why are you not discreeter? I wonder at you. If I could find my way home alone, I would go directly.

Leontion. Take breath first.

Ternissa. O how spiteful! Go away, tormenting girl, you shall not kiss me.

Leontion. Why? did he?

Ternissa. No indeed; as you saw. What a question! Kiss me! for shame; he only held me in his arms a little. Do not make him worse than he is.

Leontion. I wonder he ventured. These little barks are very dangerous. Did you find it an easy matter to keep on your feet, Epicurus?

Epicurus. We may venture, in such parties of pleasure, on waves which the sun shines on; we may venture on affections which, if not quite tranquil, are genial to the soul. Age alone interposes its chain of icy mountains, and the star above their summit soon drops behind. Heroes and demigods have acknowledged it. Recite to me, O Ternissa! in proof of this, the scene of *Peleus and Thetis.*

Ternissa. You do not believe in goddesses; and I do not believe in age.

Leontion. Who fears neither, can repeat it.

Epicurus. Draw, each of you, one of these blades of grass I am holding, and the drawer of the shortest shall repeat it.

Ternissa. O Epicurus! have you been quite fair?

Epicurus. Why doubt me?

Ternissa. Mine, I see, is the shortest. I drew out from your closed hand the blade which stood above the other.

Epicurus. Such grasses, like such men, may deceive us.

Ternissa. Must I begin? You both nod. Leontion, you are poetical: I can only feel poetry. I cannot read it tolerably; and I am sure to forget it if I trust to memory. Beside, there is something in the melody of this in particular which I sadly fear will render me inarticulate.

Epicurus. I will relieve you from half your labour, by representing the character of *Peleus*.

Ternissa. Let me down.

Epicurus. The part will never permit it.

Ternissa. I continue mute then. Be quiet. I cannot speak a syllable unless I am on my feet again.

Leontion. She will be mute a long while, like the Pythoness, and speak at last.

Ternissa. Mischievous creature! as if you could possibly tell what is passing in my mind. But will not you, Epicurus, let me fall, since it must (I see) be repeated so? Shall I begin? for I am anxious to have it over.

Leontion. Why don't you? we are as anxious as you are.

Ternissa, as Thetis. 'O Peleus! O thou whom the Gods conferred on me for all my portion of happiness . . and it was (I thought) too great . .'

Epicurus, as Peleus. 'Goddess! to me, to thy Peleus, O how far more than Goddess! why then this sudden silence? why these tears? The last we shed were when the Fates divided us, saying the Earth was not thine, and the brother of Zeus, he the ruler of the waters, had called thee. Those that fall between the beloved at parting, are bitter, and ought to be: woe to him who wishes

they were not! but those that flow again at the returning light of the blessed feet, should be refreshing and divine as morn.'

Ternissa, as Thetis. 'Support me, support me in thy arms, once more, once only. Lower not thy shoulder from my cheek, to gaze at those features that (in times past) so pleased thee. The sky is serene; the heavens frown not on us: do they then prepare for us fresh sorrow? Prepare for us! ah me! the word of Zeus is spoken: our Achilles is discovered: he is borne away in the black hollow ships of Aulis, and would have flown faster than they sail, to Troy.

'Surely there are those among the Gods, or among the Goddesses, who might have forewarned me; and they did not! Were there no omens, no auguries, no dreams, to shake thee from thy security? no priest to prophesy? And what pastures are more beautiful than Larissa's? what victims more stately? Could the soothsayers turn aside their eyes from these?'

Epicurus, as Peleus. 'Approach with me and touch the altar, O my beloved! Doth not thy finger now impress the soft embers of incense? how often hath it burned, for him, for thee! And the lowings of the herds are audible for their leaders, from the sources of Apidanus and Enipeus to the sea-beach. They may yet prevail.'

Ternissa, as Thetis. 'Alas! alas! Priests can foretell but not avert the future; and all they can give us are vague promises and abiding fears.'

Epicurus, as Peleus. 'Despond not, my long-lost Thetis! Hath not a God led thee back to me? why not hope then he will restore our son? Which of them all hath such a boy offended?'

Ternissa, as Thetis. 'Uncertainties . . worse than uncertainties . . overthrow and overwhelm me.'

Epicurus, as Peleus. 'There is a comfort in the midst of every uncertainty, saving those which perplex the Gods and confound the godlike, Love's. Be comforted! not by my kisses, but by my words. Achilles may live till our old age. *Ours!* Had I forgotten thy divinity? forgotten it in thy beauty? Other mortals think their beloved partake of it then mostly when they are gazing on their charms; but thy tenderness is more than godlike; and never have I known, never have I wished to know, whether aught in our inferior nature may resemble it.'

Ternissa, as Thetis. 'A mortal so immutable, the Powers above are less.'

Epicurus, as Peleus. 'Time without grief would not have greatly changed me.'

Ternissa, as Thetis. 'There is a loveliness which youth may be without, and which the Gods want. To the voice of compassion not a shell in all the ocean is attuned; and no tear ever dropped upon Olympus. Thou lookest as fondly as ever, and more pensively. Have time and grief done this? and they alone? my Peleus! Tell me again, have no freshly fond anxieties? . . .'

Epicurus, as Peleus. 'Smile thus! O smile afresh! and forget thy sorrows. Ages shall fly over my tomb, while thou art flourishing in imperishable youth, the desire of Gods, the light of the depths of Ocean, the inspirer and sustainer of ever-flowing song.'

Ternissa, as Thetis. 'I receive thy words, I deposit them in my bosom, and bless them. Gods

may desire me: I have loved Peleus. Our union had many obstacles; the envy of mortals, the jealousy of immortals, hostility and persecution from around, from below, and from above. When we were happy they parted us: and again they unite us in eternal grief.'

Epicurus, as Peleus. 'The wish of a Divinity is powerfuller than the elements and swifter than the light. Hence thou (what to me is impossible) mayest see the sweet Achilles every day, every hour.'

Ternissa, as Thetis. 'How few! alas how few! I see him in the dust, in agony, in death: I see his blood on the flints, his yellow hair flapping in its current, his hand unable to remove it from his eyes. I hear his voice; and it calls not upon me! Mothers are soon forgotten! It is weakness to love the weak! I could not save him! He would have left the caverns of Ocean, and the groves and meadows of Elysium, though resounding with the songs of love and heroism, for a field of battle.'

Epicurus, as Peleus. 'He may yet live many years. Troy hath been taken once already.'

Ternissa, as Thetis. 'He must perish; and at Troy; and now.'

Epicurus, as Peleus. 'The *now* of the Gods is more than life's duration: other Gods and other worlds are formed within it. If indeed he must perish at Troy, his ashes will lie softly on hers. Thus fall our beauteous son! thus rest Achilles!'

Ternissa, as Thetis. 'Twice nine years have scarcely yet passed over his head, since "O the youth of Aemathia! O the swift, the golden-haired Peleus!" were the only words sounded in

the halls of Tethys. How many shells were broken for their hoarseness! how many reproofs were heard by the Tritons for interrupting the slumbers . . of those who never slept! But they feigned sound sleep: and joy and kindness left the hearts of sisters. We loved too well for others to love *us*.

'Why do I remember the day? why do I remind thee of it? . . my Achilles dies! it was the day that gave me my Achilles! Dearer he was to me than the light of heaven, before he ever saw it: and how much dearer now! when, bursting forth on earth like its first dayspring, all the loveliness of Nature stands back, and grows pale and faint before his. He is what thou wert when I first beheld thee. How can I bear again so great a deprivation?'

Epicurus, as Peleus. 'O, thou art fallen! thou art fallen through my embrace, when I thought on him more than on thee. Look up again; look, and forgive me. No: thy forgiveness I deserve not . . . but did I deserve thy love? Thy solitude, thy abasement, thy parental tears, and thy fall to the earth, are from me! Why does aught of youth linger with me? why not come age and death? The monster of Calydon made (as thou knowest) his first and most violent rush against this arm; no longer fit for war, no longer a defence to the people. And is the day too come when it can no longer sustain my Thetis?'

Ternissa, as Thetis. 'Protend it not to the skies! invoke not, name not, any Deity! I fear them all. Nay, lift me not thus above thy head, O Peleus! reproaching the Gods with such an awful look; with a look of beauty which they will

not pity, with a look of defiance which they may not brook.'

Epicurus, as Peleus. 'Doth not my hand enclasp that slender foot, at which the waves of Ocean cease to be tumultuous, and the children of Aeolus to disturb their peace! O! if in the celestial coolness of thy cheek, now resting on my head, there be not the breath and gift of immortality; O! if Zeus hath any thunder-bolt in reserve for me; let this, my beloved Thetis, be the hour!'

Leontion. You have repeated it admirably; and you well deserve to be seated as you are, on the only bank of violets in this solitary place. Indeed you must want repose. Why do you continue to look sad? It is all over. Ah my silly comfort! That may be the reason.

Ternissa. I shall be very angry with him for the way (if you saw it) in which he made me slip down: and I should have been so at the time, if it would not have hurt the representation.

Yes, indeed, you may expect it, sir!

Epicurus. I shall always say, 'at any hour but this.'

Ternissa. Talk reasonably; and return to your discourse on age. I wish you had a little more of its prudence and propriety.

Epicurus. And what else?

Ternissa. O! those are quite enough.

Epicurus. There we agree. And now for obedience to your wishes. Peleus, you observe, makes no complaint that age is advancing on him: death itself is not unwelcome: for he had been happier than he could ever hope to be again. They who have long been wretched wish for death: they

who have long been fortunate, may with equal reason. But it is wiser in each condition to await it than to desire it.

Ternissa. I love to hear stories of heroic men, in whose bosoms there is left a place for tenderness.

Leontion said that even bad writers may amuse our idle hours: alas! even good ones do not much amuse mine, unless they record an action of love or generosity. As for the graver, why cannot they come among us and teach us, just as you do?

Epicurus. Would you wish it?

Ternissa. No, no; I do not want them: only I was imagining how pleasant it is to converse as we are doing, and how sorry I should be to pore over a book instead of it. Books always make me sigh, and think about other things. Why do you laugh, Leontion?

Epicurus. She was mistaken in saying bad authors may amuse our idleness. Leontion knows not then how sweet and sacred idleness is.

Leontion. To render it sweet and sacred, the heart must have a little garden of its own, with its umbrage and fountains and perennial flowers; a careless company! Sleep is called sacred as well as sweet by Homer: and idleness is but a step from it. The idleness of the wise and virtuous should be both, it being the repose and refreshment necessary for past exertions and for future. It punishes the bad man, it rewards the good: the Deities enjoy it, and Epicurus praises it. I was indeed wrong in my remark: for we should never seek amusement in the foibles of another, never in coarse language, never in low thoughts. When the mind loses its feeling for elegance, it

grows corrupt and grovelling, and seeks in the crowd what ought to be found at home.

Epicurus. Aspasia believed so, and bequeathed to Leontion, with every other gift that Nature had bestowed upon her, the power of delivering her oracles from diviner lips.

Leontion. Fie! Epicurus! It is well you hide my face for me with your hand. Now take it away: we cannot walk in this manner.

Epicurus. No word could ever fall from you without its weight; no breath from you ought to lose itself in the common air.

Leontion. For shame! What would you have?

Ternissa. He knows not what he would have nor what he would say. I must sit down again. I declare I scarcely understand a single syllable. Well, he is very good, to teaze you no longer. Epicurus has an excellent heart; he would give pain to no one; least of all to you.

Leontion. I have pained him by this foolish book, and he would only assure me that he does not for a moment bear me malice. Take the volume: take it, Epicurus! tear it in pieces.

Epicurus. No, Leontion! I shall often look with pleasure on this trophy of brave humanity: let me kiss the hand that raises it!

Ternissa. I am tired of sitting: I am quite stiff: when shall we walk homeward?

Epicurus. Take my arm, Ternissa!

Ternissa. O! I had forgotten that I proposed to myself a trip as far up as the pinasters, to look at the precipice of Orithyeia. Come along! come along! how alert does the sea-air make us! I seem to feel growing at my feet and shoulders the wings of Zethes or Calaïs.

Epicurus. Leontion walks the nimblest to-day.

Ternissa. To display her activity and strength, she runs before us. Sweet Leontion, how good she is! but she should have stayed for us: it would be in vain to try to overtake her.

No, Epicurus! Mind! take care! you are crushing these little oleanders . . and now the strawberry plants . . the whole heap . . Not I, indeed. What would my mother say, if she knew it! And Leontion! she will certainly look back.

Epicurus. The fairest of the Eudaimones never look back: such are the Hours and Love, Opportunity and Leontion.

Ternissa. How could you dare to treat me in this manner? I did not say again I hated anything.

Epicurus. Forgive me!

Ternissa. Violent creature!

Epicurus. If tenderness is violence. Forgive me; and say you love me.

Ternissa. All at once? Could you endure such boldness?

Epicurus. Pronounce it! whisper it!

Ternissa. Go, go. Would it be proper?

Epicurus. Is that sweet voice asking its heart or me? let the worthier give the answer.

Ternissa. O Epicurus! you are very, very dear to me . . and are the last in the world that would ever tell you were called so.

MARCELLUS AND HANNIBAL

Hannibal. Could a Numidian horseman ride no faster? Marcellus! ho! Marcellus! He moves not . . he is dead. Did he not stir his fingers? Stand wide, soldiers . . wide, forty paces . . give him air . . bring water . . halt! Gather those broad leaves, and all the rest, growing under the brushwood . . unbrace his armour. Loose the helmet first . . his breast rises. I fancied his eyes were fixed on me . . they have rolled back again. Who presumed to touch my shoulder? This horse? It was surely the horse of Marcellus! Let no man mount him. Ha! ha! the Romans too sink into luxury: here is gold about the charger.

Gaulish Chieftain. Execrable thief! The golden chain of our king under a beast's grinders! The vengeance of the gods has overtaken the impure . .

Hannibal. We will talk about vengeance when we have entered Rome, and about purity among the priests, if they will hear us. Sound for the surgeon. That arrow may be extracted from the side, deep as it is . . . The conqueror of Syracuse lies before me . . . Send a vessel off to Carthage. Say Hannibal is at the gates of Rome . . . Marcellus, who stood alone between us, fallen. Brave man! I would rejoice and cannot . . . How awfully serene a countenance! Such as we hear are in the islands of the Blessed. And how glorious a form and stature! Such too was theirs! They also once lay thus upon the earth wet with their blood . . few other enter there. And what plain armour!

Gaulish Chieftain. My party slew him . . indeed I think I slew him myself. I claim the chain : it belongs to my king : the glory of Gaul requires it. Never will she endure to see another take it : rather would she lose her last man. We swear ! we swear !

Hannibal. My friend, the glory of Marcellus did not require him to wear it. When he suspended the arms of your brave king in the temple, he thought such a trinket unworthy of himself and of Jupiter. The shield he battered down, the breastplate he pierced with his sword, these he showed to the people and to the gods ; hardly his wife and little children saw this, ere his horse wore it.

Gaulish Chieftain. Hear me, O Hannibal.

Hannibal. What ! when Marcellus lies before me ? when his life may perhaps be recalled ? when I may lead him in triumph to Carthage ? when Italy, Sicily, Greece, Asia, wait to obey me ! Content thee ! I will give thee mine own bridle, worth ten such.

Gaulish Chieftain. For myself ?

Hannibal. For thyself.

Gaulish Chieftain. And these rubies and emeralds and that scarlet . .

Hannibal. Yes, yes.

Gaulish Chieftain. O glorious Hannibal ! unconquerable hero ! O my happy country ! to have such an ally and defender. I swear eternal gratitude . . yes, gratitude, love, devotion, beyond eternity.

Hannibal. In all treaties we fix the time : I could hardly ask a longer. Go back to thy station . . I would see what the surgeon is about, and hear what he thinks. The life of Marcellus ;

the triumph of Hannibal! What else has the world in it? only Rome and Carthage. These follow.

Surgeon. Hardly an hour of life is left.

Marcellus. I must die then! The gods be praised! The commander of a Roman army is no captive.

Hannibal (*to the Surgeon*). Could not he bear a sea-voyage? Extract the arrow.

Surgeon. He expires that moment.

Marcellus. It pains me: extract it.

Hannibal. Marcellus, I see no expression of pain on your countenance: and never will I consent to hasten the death of an enemy in my power. Since your recovery is hopeless, you say truly you are no captive.

(*To the Surgeon.*) Is there nothing, man, that can assuage the mortal pain? for, suppress the signs of it as he may, he must feel it. Is there nothing to alleviate and allay it?

Marcellus. Hannibal, give me thy hand . . thou hast found it and brought it me, compassion.

(*To the Surgeon.*) Go, friend; others want thy aid; several fell around me.

Hannibal. Recommend to your country, O Marcellus, while time permits it, reconciliation and peace with me, informing the Senate of my superiority in force, and the impossibility of resistance. The tablet is ready: let me take off this ring . . try to write, to sign it at least. Oh what satisfaction I feel at seeing you able to rest upon the elbow, and even to smile!

Marcellus. Within an hour or less, with how severe a brow would Minos say to me, 'Marcellus, is this thy writing?'

Rome loses one man: she hath lost many such, and she still hath many left.

Hannibal. Afraid as you are of falsehood, say you this? I confess in shame the ferocity of my countrymen. Unfortunately too the nearer posts are occupied by Gauls, infinitely more cruel. The Numidians are so in revenge; the Gauls both in revenge and in sport. My presence is required at a distance, and I apprehend the barbarity of one or other, learning, as they must do, your refusal to execute my wishes for the common good, and feeling that by this refusal you deprive them of their country, after so long an absence.

Marcellus. Hannibal, thou art not dying.

Hannibal. What then? What mean you?

Marcellus. That thou mayest, and very justly, have many things yet to apprehend: I can have none. The barbarity of thy soldiers is nothing to me: mine would not dare be cruel. Hannibal is forced to be absent; and his authority goes away with his horse. On this turf lies defaced the semblance of a general; but Marcellus is yet the regulator of his army. Dost thou abdicate a power conferred on thee by thy nation? Or wouldst thou acknowledge it to have become, by thy own sole fault, less plenary than thy adversary's?

I have spoken too much: let me rest; this mantle oppresses me.

Hannibal. I placed my mantle on your head when the helmet was first removed, and while you were lying in the sun. Let me fold it under, and then replace the ring.

Marcellus. Take it, Hannibal. It was given me by a poor woman who flew to me at Syracuse, and who covered it with her hair, torn off in despera-

tion that she had no other gift to offer. Little thought I that her gift and her words should be mine. How suddenly may the most powerful be in the situation of the most helpless! Let that ring and the mantle under my head be the exchange of guests at parting. The time may come, Hannibal, when thou (and the gods alone know whether as conqueror or conquered) mayest sit under the roof of my children, and in either case it shall serve thee. In thy adverse fortune, they will remember on whose pillow their father breathed his last; in thy prosperous (heaven grant it may shine upon thee in some other country) it will rejoice thee to protect them. We feel ourselves the most exempt from affliction when we relieve it, although we are then the most conscious that it may befall us.

There is one thing here which is not at the disposal of either.

Hannibal. What?

Marcellus. This body.

Hannibal. Whither would you be lifted? Men are ready.

Marcellus. I meant not so. My strength is failing. I seem to hear rather what is within than what is without. My sight and my other senses are in confusion. I would have said, This body, when a few bubbles of air shall have left it, is no more worthy of thy notice than of mine; but thy glory will not let thee refuse it to the piety of my family.

Hannibal. You would ask something else. I perceive an inquietude not visible till now.

Marcellus. Duty and Death make us think of home sometimes.

Hannibal. Thitherward the thoughts of the conqueror and of the conquered fly together.

Marcellus. Hast thou any prisoners from my escort ?

Hannibal. A few dying lie about . . and let them lie . . they are Tuscans. The remainder I saw at a distance, flying, and but one brave man among them . . he appeared a Roman . . a youth who turned back, though wounded. They surrounded and dragged him away, spurring his horse with their swords. These Etrurians measure their courage carefully, and tack it well together before they put it on, but throw it off again with lordly ease.

Marcellus, why think about them ? or does aught else disquiet your thoughts ?

Marcellus. I have suppressed it long enough. My son . . my beloved son.

Hannibal. Where is he ? Can it be ? Was he with you ?

Marcellus. He would have shared my fate . . and has not. Gods of my country ! beneficent throughout life to me, in death surpassingly beneficent, I render you, for the last time, thanks.

METELLUS AND MARIUS

Metellus. Well met, Caius Marius ! My orders are to find instantly a centurion who shall mount the walls ; one capable of observation, acute in remark, prompt, calm, active, intrepid. The Numantians are sacrificing to the gods in secrecy : they have sounded the horn once only ; and hoarsely, and low, and mournfully.

Marius. Was that ladder I see yonder among the caper-bushes and purple lilies, under where

the fig-tree grows out of the rampart, left for me ?

Metellus. Even so, wert thou willing. Wouldst thou mount it ?

Marius. Rejoicingly. If none are below or near, may I explore the state of things by entering the city ?

Metellus. Use thy discretion in that.

What seest thou ? Wouldst thou leap down ? Lift the ladder.

Marius. Are there spikes in it where it sticks in the turf ? I should slip else.

Metellus. How ! bravest of our centurions, art even thou afraid ? Seest thou any one by ?

Marius. Ay ; some hundreds close beneath me.

Metellus. Retire then. Hasten back ; I will protect thy descent.

Marius. May I speak, O Metellus, without an offence to discipline ?

Metellus. Say.

Marius. Listen ! Dost thou not hear !

Metellus. Shame on thee ! alight, alight ! my shield shall cover thee.

Marius. There is a murmur like the hum of bees in the beanfield of Cereate ; for the sun is hot, and the ground is thirsty. When will it have drunk up for me the blood that has run, and is yet oozing on it, from those fresh bodies !

Metellus. How ? We have not fought for many days ; what bodies then are fresh ones ?

Marius. Close beneath the wall are those of infants and of girls : in the middle of the road are youths, emaciated ; some either unwounded or wounded months ago ; some on their spears, others on their swords : no few have received

in mutual death the last interchange of friendship ; their daggers unite them, hilt to hilt, bosom to bosom.

Metellus. Mark rather the living . . . what are they about ?

Marius. About the sacrifice, which portends them, I conjecture, but little good, it burns sullenly and slowly. The victim will lie upon the pyre till morning, and still be unconsumed, unless they bring more fuel.

I will leap down and walk on cautiously, and return with tidings, if death should spare me.

Never was any race of mortals so unmilitary as these Numantians : no watch, no stations, no palisades across the streets.

Metellus. Did they want then all the wood for the altar ?

Marius. It appears so. . . I will return anon.

Metellus. The gods speed thee, my brave honest Marius !

Marius (*returned*). The ladder should have been better spiked for that slippery ground. I am down again safe, however. Here a man may walk securely, and without picking his steps.

Metellus. Tell me, Caius, what thou sawest.

Marius. The streets of Numantia.

Metellus. Doubtless ; but what else ?

Marius. The temples and markets and places of exercise and fountains.

Metellus. Art thou crazed, centurion ! what more ? Speak plainly, at once, and briefly.

Marius. I beheld then all Numantia.

Metellus. Has terror maddened thee ? hast thou descried nothing of the inhabitants but those carcasses under the ramparts ?

Marius. Those, O Metellus, lie scattered, although not indeed far asunder. The greater part of the soldiers and citizens, of the fathers, husbands, widows, wives, espoused, were assembled together.

Metellus. About the altar ?

Marius. Upon it.

Metellus. So busy and earnest in devotion ! but how all upon it ?

Marius. It blazed under them and over them and round about them.

Metellus. Immortal gods ! Art thou sane, Caius Marius ? Thy visage is scorched : thy speech may wander after such an enterprise : thy shield burns my hand.

Marius. I thought it had cooled again. Why, truly, it seems hot : I now feel it.

Metellus. Wipe off those embers.

Marius. 'Twere better : there will be none opposite to shake them upon, for some time.

The funereal horn, that sounded with such feebleness, sounded not so from the faint heart of him who blew it. Him I saw ; him only of the living. Should I say it ? there was another : there was one child whom its parent could not kill, could not part from. She had hidden it in her robe, I suspect ; and, when the fire had reached it, either it shrieked or she did. For suddenly a cry pierced through the crackling pinewood, and something of round in figure fell from brand to brand, until it reached the pavement, at the feet of him who had blown the horn. I rushed toward him, for I wanted to hear the whole story, and felt the pressure of time. Condemn not my weakness, O Caecilius ! I wished an enemy to live an hour longer ; for my orders were to explore

and bring intelligence. When I gazed on him, in height almost gigantic, I wondered not that the blast of his trumpet was so weak: rather did I wonder that Famine, whose hand had indented every limb and feature, had left him any voice articulate. I rushed toward him, however, ere my eyes had measured either his form or strength. He held the child against me, and staggered under it.

'Behold', he exclaimed, 'the glorious ornament of a Roman triumph!'

I stood horror-stricken; when suddenly drops, as of rain, pattered down from the pyre. I looked; and many were the precious stones, many were the amulets and rings and bracelets, and other barbaric ornaments, unknown to me in form or purpose, that tinkled on the hardened and black branches, from mothers and wives and betrothed maids; and some too, I can imagine, from robuster arms, things of joyance won in battle. The crowd of incumbent bodies was so dense and heavy, that neither the fire nor the smoke could penetrate upward from among them; and they sank, whole and at once, into the smouldering cavern eaten out below. He at whose neck hung the trumpet felt this, and started.

'There is yet room,' he cried, 'and there is strength enough yet, both in the element and in me.'

He extended his withered arms, he thrust forward the gaunt links of his throat, and upon gnarled knees, that smote each other audibly, tottered into the civic fire. It, like some hungry and strangest beast on the innermost wild of Africa, pierced, broken, prostrate, motionless, gazed at

by its hunter in the impatience of glory, in the delight of awe, panted once more, and seized him.

I have seen within this hour, O Metellus! what Rome in the cycle of her triumphs will never see, what the Sun in his eternal course can never show her, what the Earth has borne but now and must never rear again for her, what Victory herself has envied her—a Numantian.

Metellus. We shall feast to-morrow. Hope, Caius Marius, to become a tribune: trust in fortune.

Marius. Auguries are surer: surest of all is perseverance.

Metellus. I hope the wine has not grown vapid in my tent: I have kept it waiting, and must now report to Scipio the intelligence of our discovery. Come after me, Caius.

Marius (*alone*). The tribune is the discoverer! the centurion is the scout! Caius Marius must enter more Numantias. Light-hearted Caecilius, thou mayest perhaps hereafter, and not with humbled but with exulting pride, take orders from this hand. If Scipio's words are fate, and to me they sound so, the portals of the Capitol may shake before my chariot, as my horses plunge back at the applauses of the people, and Jove in his high domicile may welcome the citizen of Arpinum.

LUCULLUS AND CAESAR

Caesar. Lucius Lucullus, I come to you privately and unattended for reasons which you will know; confiding, I dare not say in your friendship, since no service of mine toward you has deserved it, but in your generous and disinterested love of peace. Hear me on. Cneius Pompeius, according to the report of my connexions in the city, had, on the instant of my leaving it for the province, begun to solicit his dependants to strip me ignominiously of authority. Neither vows nor affinities can bind him. He would degrade the father of his wife; he would humiliate his own children, the unoffending, the unborn; he would poison his own ardent love, at the suggestion of Ambition. Matters are now brought so far, that either he or I must submit to a reverse of fortune; since no concession can assuage his malice, divert his envy, or gratify his cupidity. No sooner could I raise myself up, from the consternation and stupefaction into which the certainty of these reports had thrown me, than I began to consider in what manner my own private afflictions might become the least noxious to the republic. Into whose arms then could I throw myself more naturally and more securely, to whose bosom could I commit and consign more sacredly the hopes and destinies of our beloved country, than his who laid down power in the midst of its enjoyments, in the vigour of youth, in the pride of triumph: when Dignity solicited, when Friendship urged, entreated, supplicated, and when

Liberty herself invited and beckoned to him, from the senatorial order and from the curule chair? Betrayed and abandoned by those we had confided in, our next friendship, if ever our hearts receive any, or if any will venture in those places of desolation, flies forward instinctively to what is most contrary and dissimilar. Caesar is hence the visitant of Lucullus.

Lucullus. I had always thought Pompeius more moderate and more reserved than you represent him, Caius Julius! and yet I am considered in general, and surely you also will consider me, but little liable to be prepossessed by him.

Caesar. Unless he may have ingratiated himself with you recently, by the administration of that worthy whom last winter his partisans dragged before the senate, and forced to assert publicly that you and Cato had instigated a party to circumvent and murder him; and whose carcass, a few days afterward, when it had been announced that he had died by a natural death, was found covered with bruises, stabs, and dislocations.

Lucullus. You bring much to my memory which had quite slipped out of it, and I wonder that it could make such an impression on yours. A proof to me that the interest you take in my behalf began earlier than your delicacy will permit you to acknowledge. You are fatigued, which I ought to have perceived before.

Caesar. Not at all: the fresh air has given me life and alertness: I feel it upon my cheek even in the room.

Lucullus. After our dinner and sleep, we will spend the remainder of the day on the subject of your visit.

Caesar. Those Ethiopian slaves of yours shiver with cold upon the mountain here; and truly I myself was not insensible to the change of climate, in the way from Mutina.

What white bread! I never found such even at Naples or Capua. This Formian wine (which I prefer to the Chian) how exquisite!

Lucullus. Such is the urbanity of Caesar, even while he bites his lip with displeasure. How! surely it bleeds! Permit me to examine the cup.

Caesar. I believe a jewel has fallen out of the rim in the carriage: the gold is rough there.

Lucullus. Marcipor! let me never see that cup again. No answer, I desire. My guest pardons heavier faults. Mind that dinner be prepared for us shortly.

Caesar. In the meantime, Lucullus, if your health permits it, shall we walk a few paces round the villa? for I have not seen anything of the kind before.

Lucullus. The walls are double: the space between them two feet: the materials for the most part earth and stubble. Two hundred slaves, and about as many mules and oxen, brought the beams and rafters up the mountain: my architects fixed them at once in their places: every part was ready, even the wooden nails. The roof is thatched, you see.

Caesar. Is there no danger that so light a material should be carried off by the winds, on such an eminence?

Lucullus. None resists them equally well.

Caesar. On this immensely high mountain I should be apprehensive of the lightning, which

the poets, and I think the philosophers too, have told us, strikes the highest.

Lucullus. The poets are right; for whatever is received as truth, is truth in poetry; and a fable may illustrate like a fact. But the philosophers are wrong; as they generally are, even in the commonest things; because they seldom look beyond their own tenets, unless through captiousness; and because they argue more than they meditate, and display more than they examine. Archimedes and Euclid are, in my opinion, the worthiest of the name; they alone having kept apart to the demonstrable, the practical, and the useful. Many of the rest are good writers and good disputants; but unfaithful suitors of simple Science; boasters of their acquaintance with gods and goddesses, plagiaries and impostors. I had forgotten my roof, although it is composed of much the same materials as the philosophers'. Let the lightning fall: one handful of silver, or less, repairs the damage.

Caesar. Impossible! nor indeed one thousand; nor twenty, if those tapestries and pictures are consumed.

Lucullus. True; but only the thatch would burn. For before the baths were tessellated, I filled the area with alum and water, and soaked the timbers and laths for many months, and covered them afterward with alum in powder, by means of liquid glue. Mithridates taught me this. Having in vain attacked with combustibles a wooden tower, I took it by stratagem, and found within it a mass of alum, which, if a great hurry had not been observed by us among the enemy in the attempt to conceal it, would have

escaped our notice. I never scrupled to extort the truth from my prisoners: but my instruments were purple robes and plate, and the only wheel in my armoury, destined to such purposes, was the wheel of Fortune.

Caesar. I wish, in my campaigns, I could have equalled your clemency and humanity: but the Gauls are more uncertain, fierce, and perfidious, than the wildest tribes of Caucasus; and our policy cannot be carried with us: it must be formed upon the spot. They love you, not for abstaining from hurting them, but for ceasing; and they embrace you only at two seasons; when stripes are fresh or when stripes are imminent. Elsewhere I hope to become the rival of Lucullus in this admirable part of virtue.

I shall never build villas, because . . but what are your proportions? Surely the edifice is extremely low.

Lucullus. There is only one floor: the height of the apartments is twenty feet to the cornice, five above it; the breadth is twenty-five; the length forty. The building, as you perceive, is quadrangular: three sides contain four rooms each: the other has many partitions and two stories, for domestics and offices. Here is my salt-bath.

Caesar. A bath indeed for all the Nereids named by Hesiod, with room enough for the Tritons and their herds and horses.

Lucullus. Next to it, where yonder boys are carrying the myrrhine vases, is a tepid one of fresh water, ready for your reception.

Caesar. I resign the higher pleasure for the inferior, as we all are apt to do; and I will return

to the enjoyment of your conversation when I have indulged a quarter of an hour in this refreshment.

Lucullus. Meanwhile I will take refuge with some less elegant philosopher, whose society I shall quit again with less regret. (*Caesar returning.*) It is useless, O Caius Julius, to inquire if there has been any negligence or any omission in the service of the bath: for these are secrets which you never impart to the most favoured of your friends.

Caesar. I have often enjoyed the luxury much longer, but never more highly. Pardon my impatience to see the remainder of your Apennine villa.

Lucullus. Here stand my two cows. Their milk is brought to me with its warmth and froth; for it loses its salubrity both by repose and by motion. Pardon me, Caesar: I shall appear to you to have forgotten that I am not conducting Marcus Varro.

Caesar. You would convert him into Cacus: he would drive them off. What beautiful beasts! how sleek and white and cleanly! I never saw any like them, excepting when we sacrifice to Jupiter the stately leader from the pastures of the Clitumnus.

Lucullus. Often do I make a visit to these quiet creatures, and with no less pleasure than in former days to my horses. Nor indeed can I much wonder that whole nations have been consentaneous in treating them as objects of devotion: the only thing wonderful is, that gratitude seems to have acted as powerfully and extensively as fear; indeed more extensively; for no object of worship whatever has attracted so many worshippers Where

Jupiter has one, the cow has ten: she was venerated before he was born, and will be when even the carvers have forgotten him.

Caesar. Unwillingly should I see it; for the character of our gods has formed the character of our nation. Serapis and Isis have stolen in among them within our memory, and others will follow, until at last Saturn will not be the only one emasculated by his successor. What can be more august than our rites? The first dignitaries of the republic are emulous to administer them: nothing of low or venal has any place in them, nothing pusillanimous, nothing unsocial and austere. I speak of them as they were; before Superstition woke up again from her slumber, and caught to her bosom with maternal love the alluvial monsters of the Nile. Philosophy, never fit for the people, had entered the best houses, and the image of Epicurus had taken the place of the Lemures. But men cannot bear to be deprived long together of anything they are used to; not even of their fears; and, by a reaction of the mind appertaining to our nature, new stimulants were looked for, not on the side of pleasure, where nothing new could be expected or imagined, but on the opposite. Irreligion is followed by fanaticism, and fanaticism by irreligion, alternately and perpetually.

Lucullus. The religion of our country, as you observe, is well adapted to its inhabitants. Our progenitor Mars hath Venus recumbent on his breast, and looking up to him, teaching us that pleasure is to be sought in the bosom of valour and by the means of war. No great alteration, I think, will ever be made in our rites and cere-

monies; the best and most imposing that could be collected from all nations, and uniting them to us by our complaisance in adopting them. The gods themselves may change names, to flatter new power: and indeed, as we degenerate, Religion will accommodate herself to our propensities and desires. Our heaven is now popular: it will become monarchal: not without a crowded court, as befits it, of apparitors, and satellites and minions of both sexes, paid and caressed for carrying to their stern dark-bearded master prayers and supplications. Altars must be strown with broken minds, and incense rise amid abject aspirations. Gods will be found unfit for their places; and it is not impossible that, in the ruin imminent from our contentions for power, and in the necessary extinction both of ancient families and of generous sentiments, our consular fasces may become the water-sprinklers of some upstart priesthood, and that my son may apply for lustration to the son of my groom. The interest of such men requires that the spirit of arms and of arts be extinguished. They will predicate peace, that the people may be tractable to them: but a religion altogether pacific is the fomenter of wars and the nurse of crimes, alluring Sloth from within and Violence from afar. If ever it should prevail among the Romans, it must prevail alone: for nations more vigorous and energetic will invade them, close upon them, trample them under foot; and the name of Roman, which is now the most glorious, will become the most opprobrious upon earth.

Caesar. The time I hope may be distant; for next to my own name I hold my country's.

Lucullus. Mine, not coming from Troy or Ida, is lower in my estimation: I place my country's first.

You are surveying the little lake beside us. It contains no fish: birds never alight on it: the water is extremely pure and cold: the walk round is pleasant; not only because there is always a gentle breeze from it, but because the turf is fine, and the surface of the mountain on this summit is perfectly on a level, to a great extent in length; not a trifling advantage to me, who walk often, and am weak. I have no alley, no garden, no inclosure: the park is in the vale below, where a brook supplies the ponds, and where my servants are lodged; for here I have only twelve in attendance.

Caesar. What is that so white, toward the Adriatic?

Lucullus. The Adriatic itself. Turn round, and you may descry the Tuscan Sea. Our situation is reported to be among the highest of the Apennines . . . Marcipor has made the sign to me that dinner is ready. Pass this way.

Caesar. What a library is here! Ah Marcus Tullius! I salute thy image. Why frownest thou upon me? collecting the consular robe and uplifting the right arm, as when Rome stood firm again, and Catiline fled before thee.

Lucullus. Just so; such was the action the statuary chose, as adding a new endearment to the memory of my absent friend.

Caesar. Sylla, who honoured you above all men, is not here.

Lucullus. I have his *Commentaries*: he inscribed them, as you know, to me. Something even of

our benefactors may be forgotten, and gratitude be unreproved.

Caesar. The impression on that couch, and the two fresh honeysuckles in the leaves of those two books, would show, even to a stranger, that this room is peculiarly the master's. Are they sacred ?

Lucullus. To me and Caesar.

Caesar. I would have asked permission . .

Lucullus. Caius Julius, you have nothing to ask of Polybius and Thucydides ; nor of Xenophon the next to them on the table.

Caesar. Thucydides ! the most generous, the most unprejudiced, the most sagacious, of historians. Now, Lucullus, you whose judgement in style is more accurate than any other Roman's, do tell me whether a commander, desirous of writing his *Commentaries*, could take to himself a more perfect model than Thucydides.

Lucullus. Nothing is more perfect, nor ever will be : the scholar of Pericles, the master of Demosthenes ! the equal of the one in military science, and of the other not the inferior in civil and forensic ; the calm dispassionate judge of the general by whom he was defeated ; his defender, his encomiast. To talk of such men is conducive not only to virtue but to health.

Caesar. We have no writer who could keep up long together his severity and strength. I would follow him ; but I shall be contented with my genius, if (Thucydides in sight) I come many paces behind, and attain by study and attention the graceful and secure mediocrity of Xenophon.

Lucullus. You will avoid, I think, Caesar, one of his peculiarities ; his tendency to superstition.

Caesar. I dare promise this ; and even to write

nothing so flat and idle as his introduction to the *Cyropaedia*. The first sentence that follows it, I perceive, repeats the same word, with its substantive, four times. This is a trifle: but great writers and great painters do miracles or mischief by a single touch. Our authors are so addicted of late to imitate the Grecian, that a bad introduction is more classical than a good one. Not to mention any friend of yours, Crispus Sallustius, who is mine, brought me one recently of this description; together with some detached pieces of a history, which nothing in our prose or poetry hath surpassed in animation.

Lucullus. We ought to talk of these things by ourselves; not before the vulgar; by which expression I mean the unlearned and irreverent, in forum and in senate. Our Cicero has indeed avoided such inelegance as that of Xenophon: one perhaps less pardonable may be found repeatedly in his works: I would say an inelegance not arising from neglect, or obtusity of ear, but coming forth in the absence of reflection. He often says, '*mirari soleo*.' Now surely a wise man soon ceases to wonder at anything, and, instead of indulging in the habitude of wonder at one object, brings it closer to him, makes it familiar, discusses, and dismisses it. He told me in his last letter of an incredible love and affection for me. Pardon me, Caesar! pardon me, Genius of Rome! and Mercury! I exclaimed, '*The clown!*' laughing heartily. He would not that I should really have thought his regard *incredible*; on the contrary, that I should believe it and confide in it to its full extent, and that I should flatter myself it was not only possible but reasonable.

In vain will any one remark to me, '*Such phrases are common.*' In our ordinary language there are many beauties, more or less visible according to their place and season, which a judicious writer and forcible orator will subject to his arbitration and service: there are also many things which, if used at all, must be used cautiously. I may be much at my ease, without being in tatters, and without treading on the feet of those I come forward to salute. I arrogate to myself no superiority, in detecting a peculiar and latent mark upon that exalted luminary: his own effulgence showed me it. From Cicero down to me the distance is as great, as between the prince of the senate and the lowest voter. I influenced the friends of order; he fulminated and exterminated the enemies. I have served my country; he hath saved it.

This other is my dining-room. You expect the dishes.

Caesar. I misunderstood . . I fancied . .

Lucullus. Repose yourself, and touch with the ebony wand, beside you, the sphynx on either of those obelisks, right or left.

Caesar. Let me look at them first.

Lucullus. The contrivance was intended for one person, or two at most, desirous of privacy and quiet. The blocks of jasper in my pair, and of porphyry in yours, easily yield in their grooves, each forming one partition. There are four, containing four platforms. The lower holds four dishes, such as sucking forest-boars, venison, hares, tunnies, sturgeons, which you will find within; the upper three, eight each, but diminutive. The confectionery is brought separately; for the steam would spoil it, if any should escape. The melons

are in the snow thirty feet under us: they came early this morning from a place in the vicinity of Luni, so that I hope they may be crisp, independently of their coolness.

Caesar. I wonder not at anything of refined elegance in Lucullus: but really here Antiochia and Alexandria seem to have cooked for us, and magicians to be our attendants.

Lucullus. The absence of slaves from our repast is the luxury: for Marcipor alone enters, and he only when I press a spring with my foot or wand. When you desire his appearance, touch that chalcedony, just before you.

Caesar. I eat quick, and rather plentifully: yet the valetudinarian (excuse my rusticity, for I rejoice at seeing it) appears to equal the traveller in appetite, and to be contented with one dish.

Lucullus. It is milk: such, with strawberries, which ripen on the Apennines many months in continuance, and some other berries of sharp and grateful flavour, has been my only diet since my first residence here. The state of my health requires it; and the habitude of nearly three months renders this food not only more commodious to my studies and more conducive to my sleep, but also more agreeable to my palate, than any other.

Caesar. Returning to Rome or Baiae, you must domesticate and tame them. The cherries you introduced from Pontus are now growing in Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul, and the largest and best in the world perhaps are upon the more sterile side of Lake Larius.

Lucullus. There are some fruits, and some virtues, which require a harsh soil and bleak exposure for their perfection.

Caesar. In such a profusion of viands, and so savoury, I perceive no odour.

Lucullus. A flue conducts heat through the compartments of the obelisks; and if you look up, you may observe that those gilt roses, between the astragals in the cornice, are prominent from it half a span. Here is an aperture in the wall, between which and the outer is a perpetual current of air. We are now in the dog-days; and I have never felt in the whole summer more heat than at Rome in many days of March.

Caesar. Usually you are attended by troops of domestics and of dinner-friends, not to mention the learned and scientific, nor your own family, your attachment to which, from youth upward, is one of the higher graces in your character. Your brother was seldom absent from you.

Lucullus. Marcus was coming: but the vehe ment heats along the Arno, in which valley he has a property he never saw before, inflamed his blood; and he now is resting for a few days at Faesulae, a little town destroyed by Sylla within our memory, who left it only air and water, the best in Tuscany. The health of Marcus, like mine, has been declining for several months: we are running our last race against each other: and never was I, in youth along the Tiber, so anxious of first reaching the goal. I would not outlive him: I should reflect too painfully on earlier days, and look forward too despondently on future. As for friends, lampreys and turbots beget them, and they spawn not amid the solitude of the Apennines. To dine in company with more than two, is a Gaulish and German thing. I can hardly bring myself to believe that I have eaten in concert

with twenty ; so barbarous and herdlike a practice does it now appear to me ; such an incentive to drink much and talk loosely ; not to add, such a necessity to speak loud ; which is clownish and odious in the extreme. On this mountain-summit I hear no noises, no voices, not even of salutation : we have no flies about us, and scarcely an insect or reptile.

Caesar. Your amiable son is probably with his uncle : is he well ?

Lucullus. Perfectly : he was indeed with my brother in his intended visit to me : but Marcus, unable to accompany him hither, or superintend his studies in the present state of his health, sent him directly to his uncle Cato at Tusculum, a man fitter than either of us to direct his education, and preferable to any, excepting yourself and Marcus Tullius, in eloquence and urbanity.

Caesar. Cato is so great, that whoever is greater must be the happiest and first of men.

Lucullus. That any such be still existing, O Julius, ought to excite no groan from the breast of a Roman citizen. But perhaps I wrong you ; perhaps your mind was forced reluctantly back again, on your past animosities and contests in the senate.

Caesar. I revere him, but cannot love him.

Lucullus. Then, Caius Julius, you groaned with reason ; and I would pity rather than reprove you.

On the ceiling, at which you are looking, there is no gilding, and little painting . . a mere trellis of vines bearing grapes, and the heads, shoulders, and arms, rising from the cornice only, of boys and girls climbing up to steal them, and scram-

bling for them: nothing overhead: no giants tumbling down, no Jupiter thundering, no Mars and Venus caught at midday, no river-gods pouring out their urns upon us: for, as I think nothing so insipid as a flat ceiling, I think nothing so absurd as a storied one. Before I was aware, and without my participation, the painter had adorned that of my bedchamber with a golden shower, bursting from varied and irradiated clouds. On my expostulation, his excuse was, that he knew the Danaë of Scopas, in a recumbent posture, was to occupy the centre of the room. The walls, behind the tapestry and pictures, are quite rough. In forty-three days the whole fabric was put together and habitable.

The wine has probably lost its freshness: will you try some other?

Caesar. Its temperature is exact; its flavour exquisite. Latterly I have never sat long after dinner, and am curious to pass through the other apartments, if you will trust me.

Lucullus. I attend you.

Caesar. Lucullus! who is here? what figure is that on the poop of the vessel? can it be . . .

Lucullus. The subject was dictated by myself; you gave it.

Caesar. Oh how beautifully is the water painted! how vividly the sun strikes against the snows on Taurus! the grey temples and pier-head of Tarsus catch it differently, and the monumental mount on the left is half in shade. In the countenance of those pirates I did not observe such diversity, nor that any boy pulled his father back: I did not indeed mark them or notice them at all.

Lucullus. The painter, in this fresco, the last

work finished, had dissatisfied me in one particular. 'That beautiful young face,' said I, 'appears not to threaten death.'

'Lucius,' he replied, 'if one muscle were moved, it were not Caesar's: beside, he said it jokingly, though resolved.'

'I am contented with your apology, Antipho: but what are you doing now? for you never lay down or suspend your pencil, let who will talk and argue. The lines of that smaller face in the distance are the same.'

'Not the same,' replied he, 'nor very different: it smiles; as surely the goddess must have done, at the first heroic act of her descendant.'

Caesar. In her exultation and impatience to press forward, she seems to forget that she is standing at the extremity of the shell, which rises up behind out of the water; and she takes no notice of the terror on the countenance of this Cupid who would detain her, nor of this who is flying off and looking back. The reflection of the shell has given a warmer hue below the knee: a long streak of yellow light in the horizon is on the level of her bosom; some of her hair is almost lost in it: above her head on every side is the pure azure of the heavens.

Oh! and you would not have led me up to this? You, among whose primary studies is the most perfect satisfaction of your guests!

Lucullus. In the next apartment are seven or eight other pictures from our history.

There are no more: what do you look for?

Caesar. I find not among the rest any descriptive of your own exploits. Ah Lucullus! there is no surer way of making them remembered.

This, I presume by the harps in the two corners, is the music-room.

Lucullus. No indeed; nor can I be said to have one here: for I love best the music of a single instrument, and listen to it willingly at all times, but most willingly while I am reading. At such seasons a voice or even a whisper disturbs me: but music refreshes my brain when I have read long, and strengthens it from the beginning. I find also that if I write anything in poetry (a youthful propensity still remaining) it gives rapidity and variety and brightness to my ideas. On ceasing, I command a fresh measure and instrument, or another voice; which is to the mind like a change of posture or of air to the body. My health is benefited by the gentle play thus opened to the most delicate of the fibres.

Caesar. Let me augur that a disorder so tractable may be soon removed. What is it thought to be?

Lucullus. There are they who would surmise and signify, and my physician did not long attempt to persuade me of the contrary, that the ancient realms of Aeaetes have supplied me with some other plants than the cherry, and such as I should be sorry to see domesticated here in Italy.

Caesar. The Gods forbid! Anticipate better things. The reason of Lucullus is stronger than the medicaments of Mithridates; but why not use them too? Let nothing be neglected. You may reasonably hope for many years of life: your mother still enjoys it.

Lucullus. To stand upon one's guard against Death, exasperates her malice and protracts our sufferings.

Caesar. Rightly and gravely said: but your country at this time cannot do well without you.

Lucullus. The bowl of milk which to-day is presented to me, will shortly be presented to my Manes.

Caesar. Do you suspect the hand?

Lucullus. I will not suspect a Roman: let us converse no more about it.

Caesar. It is the only subject on which I am resolved never to think, as relates to myself. Life may concern us, death not; for in death we neither can act nor reason, we neither can persuade nor command; and our statues are worth more than we are, let them be but wax. Lucius, I will not divine your thoughts: I will not penetrate into your suspicions, nor suggest mine. I am lost in admiration of your magnanimity and forbearance; that your only dissimulation should be upon the guilt of your assassin; that you should leave him power, and create him virtues.

Lucullus. Caius Julius, if I can assist you in anything you meditate, needful or advantageous to our country, speak it unreservedly.

Caesar. I really am ashamed of my association with Crassus and Pompeius: I would not have anything in common with them, not even power itself. Unworthy and ignominious must it appear to you, as it does to me, to compromise with an auctioneer and a rope-dancer; for the meanness and venality of Crassus, the levity and tergiversation of Pompeius, leave them no better names. The bestiality of the one, the infidelity of the other, urge and inflame me with an inextinguishable desire of uniting my authority to yours for the salvation of the republic.

Lucullus. I foretold to Cicero, in the words of Lucretius on the dissolution of the world,

Tria talia texta
Una dies dabit exitio.

Caesar. Assist me in accomplishing your prophecy: or rather, accept my assistance: for I would more willingly hear a proposal from you than offer one. Reflections must strike you, Lucullus, no less forcibly than me, and perhaps more justly; you are calmer. Consider all the late actions of Cneius, and tell me who has ever committed any so indecorous with so grave a face? He abstained in great measure from the follies of youth, only to reserve them accumulated for maturer age. Human life, if I may venture to speak fancifully in your presence, hath its equinoxes. In the vernal its flowers open under violent tempests: in the autumnal it is more exempt from gusts and storms, more regular, serene, and temperate, looks complacently on the fruits it has gathered, on the harvests it has reaped, and is not averse to the graces of order, to the avocations of literature, to the genial warmth of honest conviviality, and to the mild necessity of repose. Thrown out from the course of Nature, this man stood aside and solitary, and found everything around him unattractive. And now, in the decline of life, he has recourse to those associates, of whom the best that can be said is, that they would have less disgraced its outset. Repulsing you and Cicero and Cato, the leaders of his party and the propagators of his power, Pompeius the Great takes the arm of Clodius, and walks publicly with him in the forum;

who nevertheless the other day headed a chorus (I am informed) of the most profligate and opprobrious youths in Rome, and sang responsively worse than Fescennine songs to his dishonour. Where was he? Before them? in court? defending a client? He came indeed with that intention; but sat mortified, speechless, and despondent. The senate connived at the indignity. Even Gabinius, his flatterer and dependant, shuns him. The other consul is alienated from him totally, and favours me through Calpurnia, who watches over my security and interests at home. Julia, my daughter, was given in marriage to Pompeius for this purpose only: she fails to accomplish it: politically then and morally, the marriage loses its validity by losing its intent. I go into Gaul, commander for five years: Crassus is preparing for an expedition against the Parthians: the senate and people bend before Pompeius, but reluctantly and indignantly. Everything would be more tolerable to me, if I could permit him to boast that he had duped me: but my glory requires that, letting him choose his own encampment, square the declivities, clear the ground about the eminence, foss and pale it, I should storm and keep it. Whatever he may boast of his eloquence and military skill, I fear nothing from the orator who tells us what he would have spoken, nor from the general who sees what he should have done. My first proposal for accommodation and concord shall be submitted to you (if indeed you will not frame it for me), and, should you deem it unfair, shall be suppressed. No successive step shall be made by me without your concurrence: in short, I am inclined to take up any line

of conduct, in conjunction with you, for the settling of the commonwealth. Does the proposal seem to you so unimportant on the one hand, or so impracticable and unreasonable on the other, that you smile and shake your head ?

Lucullus. Caesar ! Caesar ! you write upon language and analogy ; no man better. Tell me then whether mud is not said to be settled when it sinks to the bottom ? and whether those who are about to sink a state, do not in like manner talk of settling it ?

Caesar. I wish I had time to converse with you on language, or skill to parry your reproofs with equal wit ; for serious you cannot be. At present let us remove what is bad ; which must always be done before good of any kind can spring up.

The designs of Cneius are suspected by many in the senate, and his pride is obnoxious to all. Your party would prevail against him ; for he has enriched fewer adherents than you have ; and even his best friends are for the most part in a greater degree yours.

Lucullus. I have enriched no adherents, Caius Julius. Many of my officers, it is true, are easy in their circumstances : they however gained their wealth, not from the plunder of our confederates, not from those who should enjoy with security their municipal rights and paternal farms in Italy, but from the enemy's camps and cities.

Caesar. We two might appease the public mind, preparing the leaders of the senate for our labours, and intimidating the factious.

Lucullus. Hilarity never forsakes you, Caesar ! and you are the happiest man upon earth in the facility with which you communicate it. Hear

me, and believe me. I am about to mount higher than triumviral tribunal or than triumphal car. They who are under me will turn their faces from me; such are the rites: but not a voice of reproach or of petulance shall be heard, when the trumpets tell our city that the funereal flames are surmounting the mortal spoils of Lucullus.

Caesar. Mildest and most equitable of men! I have been much wronged; would you also wrong me? Lucius, you have forced from me a tear before the time. I weep at magnanimity; which no man does who wants it.

Lucullus. Why cannot you enjoy the command of your province, and the glory of having quelled so many nations?

Caesar. I cannot bear the superiority of another.

Lucullus. The weakest of women feel so: but even the weakest of them are ashamed to acknowledge it: who hath ever heard any one? Have *you*, who know them widely and well? Poetasters and mimes, labouring under such infirmity, put the mask on. You pursue glory: the pursuit is just and rational: but reflect that statuaries and painters have represented heroes calm and quiescent, not straining and panting like pugilists and gladiators.

From being for ever in action, for ever in contention, and from excelling in them all other mortals, what advantage derive we? I would not ask what satisfaction? what glory? The insects have more activity than ourselves, the beasts more strength, even inert matter more firmness and stability; the gods alone more goodness. To the exercise of this every country lies open; and neither I eastward nor you westward have found any exhausted by contests for it.

Must we give men blows because they will not look at us ? or chain them to make them hold the balance evener ?

Do not expect to be acknowledged for what you are, much less for what you would be ; since no one can well measure a great man but upon the bier. There was a time when the most ardent friend to Alexander of Macedon would have embraced the partisan for his enthusiasm, who should have compared him with Alexander of Pherae. It must have been at a splendid feast, and late at it, when Scipio should have been raised to an equality with Romulus, or Cato with Curius. It has been whispered in my ear, after a speech of Cicero, ' If he goes on so, he will tread down the sandal of Marcus Antonius in the long run, and perhaps leave Hortensius behind.' Officers of mine, speaking about you, have exclaimed with admiration, ' He fights like Cinna.' Think, Caius Julius ! (for you have been instructed to think both as a poet and as a philosopher) that among the hundred hands of Ambition, to whom we may attribute them more properly than to Briareus, there is not one which holds anything firmly. In the precipitancy of her course, what appears great is small, and what appears small is great. Our estimate of men is apt to be as inaccurate and inexact as that of things, or more. Wishing to have all on our side, we often leave those we should keep by us, run after those we should avoid, and call importunately on others who sit quiet and will not come. We cannot at once catch the applauses of the vulgar and expect the approbation of the wise. What are parties ? Do men really great ever enter into them ? Are

they not ball-courts, where ragged adventurers strip and strive, and where dissolute youths abuse one another, and challenge, and game, and wager? If you and I cannot quite divest ourselves of infirmities and passions, let us think however that there is enough in us to be divided into two portions, and let us keep the upper undisturbed and pure. A part of Olympus itself lies in dreariness and in clouds, variable and stormy; but it is not the highest: there the gods govern. Your soul is large enough to embrace your country: all other affection is for less objects, and less men are capable of it. Abandon, O Caesar! such thoughts and wishes as now agitate and propel you: leave them to mere men of the marsh, to fat hearts and miry intellects. Fortunate may we call ourselves to have been born in an age so productive of eloquence, so rich in erudition. Neither of us would be excluded, or hooted at, on canvassing for these honours. He who can think dispassionately and deeply as I do, is great as I am; none other: but his opinions are at freedom to diverge from mine, as mine are from his; and indeed, on recollection, I never loved those most who thought with me, but those rather who deemed my sentiments worth discussion, and who corrected me with frankness and affability.

Caesar. Lucullus! you perhaps have taken the wiser and better part, certainly the pleasanter. I cannot argue with you: I would gladly hear one who could, but you again more gladly. I should think unworthily of you if I thought you capable of yielding or receding. I do not even ask you to keep our conversation long a secret; so greatly does it preponderate in your favour; so much more

of gentleness, of eloquence, and of argument. I came hither with one soldier, avoiding the cities, and sleeping at the villa of a confidential friend. To-night I sleep in yours, and, if your dinner does not disturb me, shall sleep soundly. You go early to rest, I know.

Lucullus. Not however by daylight. Be assured, Caius Julius, that greatly as your discourse afflicts me, no part of it shall escape my lips. If you approach the city with arms, with arms I meet you ; then your denouncer and enemy, at present your host and confidant.

Caesar. I shall conquer you.

Lucullus. That smile would cease upon it : you sigh already.

Caesar. Yes, Lucullus, if I am oppressed I shall overcome my oppressor : I know my army and myself. A sigh escaped me ; and many more will follow : but one transport will rise amid them, when, vanquisher of my enemies and avenger of my dignity, I press again the hand of Lucullus, mindful of this day.

TIBERIUS AND VIPSANIA

Tiberius. Vipsania, my Vipsania, whither art thou walking ?

Vipsania. Whom do I see ? my Tiberius ?

Tiberius. Ah ! no, no, no ! but thou seest the father of thy little Drusus. Press him to thy heart the more closely for this meeting, and give him . .

Vipsania. Tiberius ! the altars, the gods, the

destinies, are between us . . I will take it from this hand ; thus, thus shall he receive it.

Tiberius. Raise up thy face, my beloved ! I must not shed tears. Augustus ! Livia ! ye shall not extort them from me. Vipsania ! I may kiss thy head . . for I have saved it. Thou sayest nothing. I have wronged thee ; ay ?

Vipsania. Ambition does not see the earth she treads on : the rock and the herbage are of one substance to her. Let me excuse you to my heart, O Tiberius. It has many wants ; this is the first and greatest.

Tiberius. My ambition, I swear by the immortal Gods, placed not the bar of severance between us. A stronger hand, the hand that composes Rome and sways the world . . .

Vipsania. . . Overawed Tiberius. I know it ; Augustus willed and commanded it.

Tiberius. And overawed Tiberius ! Power bent, Death terrified, a Nero ! What is our race, that any should look down on us and spurn us ! Augustus, my benefactor, I have wronged thee ! Livia, my mother, this one cruel deed was thine ! To reign forsooth is a lovely thing ! O womanly appetite ! Who would have been before me, though the palace of Caesar cracked and split with emperors, while I, sitting in idleness on a cliff of Rhodes, eyed the sun as he swang his golden censer athwart the heavens, or his image as it overstrode the sea. I have it before me ; and though it seems falling on me, I can smile at it ; just as I did from my little favourite skiff, painted round with the marriage of Thetis, when the sailors drew their long shaggy hair across their eyes, many a stadium away from it, to mitigate its effulgence.

These too were happy days: days of happiness like these I could recall and look back upon with unaching brow.

O land of Greece! Tiberius blesses thee, bidding thee rejoice and flourish.

Why cannot one hour, Vipsania, beauteous and light as we have led, return?

Vipsania. Tiberius! is it to me that you were speaking? I would not interrupt you; but I thought I heard my name, as you walked away and looked up toward the East. So silent!

Tiberius. Who dared to call thee? Thou wert mine before the Gods . . do they deny it? Was it my fault . . .

Vipsania. Since we are separated, and for ever, O Tiberius, let us think no more on the cause of it. Let neither of us believe that the other was to blame: so shall separation be less painful.

Tiberius. O mother! and did I not tell thee what she was? patient in injury, proud in innocence, serene in grief!

Vipsania. Did you say that too? but I think it was so: I had felt little. One vast wave has washed away the impression of smaller from my memory. Could Livia, could your mother, could she who was so kind to me . . .

Tiberius. The wife of Caesar did it. But hear me now, hear me: be calm as I am. No weaknesses are such as those of a mother who loves her only son immoderately; and none are so easily worked upon from without. Who knows what impulses she received? She is very, very kind; but she regards me only; and that which at her bidding is to encompass and adorn me. All the weak look after power, protectress of

weakness. Thou art a woman, O Vipsania! is there nothing in thee to excuse my mother? So good she ever was to me! so loving!

Vipsania. I quite forgive her: be tranquil, O Tiberius!

Tiberius. Never can I know peace . . never can I pardon . . any one. Threaten me with thy exile, thy separation, thy seclusion! remind me that another climate might endanger thy health! . . There death met me and turned me round. Threaten me to take our son from us! our one boy! our helpless little one! him whom we made cry because we kissed him both together. Rememberest thou? or dost thou not hear? turning thus away from me!

Vipsania. I hear; I hear. O cease, my sweet Tiberius! Stamp not upon that stone: my heart lies under it.

Tiberius. Ay, there again death, and more than death, stood before me. O she maddened me, my mother did, she maddened me . . she threw me to where I am, at one breath. The Gods cannot replace me where I was, nor atone to me, nor console me, nor restore my senses. To whom can I fly? to whom can I open my heart? to whom speak plainly?[1] There was upon the earth a man I could converse with, and fear nothing: there was a woman too I could love, and fear nothing. What a soldier, what a Roman, was thy father, O my young bride! How could those

[1] The regret of Tiberius at the death of Agrippa may be imagined to arise from a cause of which at this moment he was unconscious. If Agrippa had lived, Julia, who was his wife, could not have been Tiberius's, nor would he and Vipsania have been separated.

who never saw him have discoursed so rightly upon virtue!

Vipsania. These words cool my breast like pressing his urn against it. He was brave: shall Tiberius want courage?

Tiberius. My enemies scorn me. I am a garland dropt from a triumphal car, and taken up and looked on for the place I occupied: and tossed away and laughed at. Senators! laugh, laugh! Your merits may be yet rewarded . . be of good cheer! Counsel me, in your wisdom, what services I can render you, conscript fathers!

Vipsania. This seems mockery: Tiberius did not smile so, once.

Tiberius. They had not then congratulated me.

Vipsania. On what?

Tiberius. And it was not because she was beautiful, as they thought her, and virtuous, as I know she is, but because the flowers on the altar were to be tied together by my heart-string. On this they congratulated me. Their day will come. Their sons and daughters are what I would wish them to be: worthy to succeed them.

Vipsania. Where is that quietude, that resignation, that sanctity, that heart of true tenderness?

Tiberius. Where is my love? my love?

Vipsania. Cry not thus aloud, Tiberius! there is an echo in the place. Soldiers and slaves may burst in upon us.

Tiberius. And see my tears? There is no echo, Vipsania! why alarm and shake me so? We are too high here for the echoes: the city is below us. Methinks it trembles and totters: would it did! from the marble quays of the Tiber to this rock. There is a strange buzz and murmur in my

brain; but I should listen so intensely, I should hear the rattle of its roofs, and shout with joy.

Vipsania. Calm, O my life! calm this horrible transport.

Tiberius. Spake I so loud? Did I indeed then send my voice after a lost sound, to bring it back; and thou fanciedest it an echo? Wilt not thou laugh with me, as thou wert wont to do, at such an error? What was I saying to thee, my tender love, when I commanded . . . I know not whom . . . to stand back, on pain of death? Why starest thou on me in such agony? Have I hurt thy fingers, child? I loose them: now let me look! Thou turnest thine eyes away from me. Oh! oh! I hear my crime! Immortal gods! I cursed then audibly, and before the sun, my mother!

EPICTETUS AND SENECA

Seneca. Epictetus! I desired your master Epaphroditus to send you hither, having been much pleased with his report of your conduct, and much surprised at the ingenuity of your writings.

Epictetus. Then I am afraid, my friend! . . .

Seneca. My friend! are these the expressions . . Well, let it pass. Philosophers must bear bravely. The people expect it.

Epictetus. Are philosophers then only philosophers for the people? and, instead of instructing them, must they play tricks before them? Give me rather the gravity of dancing dogs. Their motions are for the rabble; their reverential eyes and pendent paws are under the pressure of awe

at a master; but they are dogs, and not below their destinies.

Seneca. Epictetus! I will give you three talents to let me take that sentiment for my own.

Epictetus. I would give thee twenty, if I had them, to make it thine.

Seneca. You mean, by lending to it the graces of my language.

Epictetus. I mean, by lending it to thy conduct. And now let me console and comfort thee, under the calamity I brought on thee by calling thee *my friend.* If thou art not my friend, why send for me? Enemy I can have none: being a slave, Fortune has now done with me.

Seneca. Continue then your former observations. What were you saying?

Epictetus. That which thou interruptedst.

Seneca. What was it?

Epictetus. I should have remarked that, if thou foundest ingenuity in my writings, thou must have discovered in them some deviation from the plain homely truths of Zeno and Cleanthes.

Seneca. We all swerve a little from them.

Epictetus. In practice too?

Seneca. Yes, even in practice, I am afraid.

Epictetus. Often?

Seneca. Too often.

Epictetus. Strange! I have been attentive, and yet have remarked but one difference among you great personages at Rome.

Seneca. What difference fell under your observation?

Epictetus. Crates and Zeno and Cleanthes taught us, that our desires were to be subdued by philosophy alone. In this city, their acute and inven-

tive scholars take us aside, and show us that there is not only one way, but two.

Seneca. Two ways ?

Epictetus. They whisper in our ear, 'These two ways are philosophy and enjoyment : the wiser man will take the readier, or, not finding it, the alternative.' Thou reddenest.

Seneca. Monstrous degeneracy !

Epictetus. What magnificent rings ! I did not notice them until thou liftedst up thy hands to heaven, in detestation of such effeminacy and impudence.

Seneca. The rings are not amiss : my rank rivets them upon my fingers : I am forced to wear them. Our emperor gave me one, Epaphroditus another, Tigellinus the third. I cannot lay them aside a single day, for fear of offending the gods, and those whom they love the most worthily.

Epictetus. Although they make thee stretch out thy fingers, like the arms and legs of one of us slaves upon a cross.

Seneca. O horrible ! Find some other resemblance.

Epictetus. The extremities of a fig-leaf.

Seneca. Ignoble !

Epictetus. The claws of a toad, trodden on or stoned.

Seneca. You have great need, Epictetus, of an instructor in eloquence and rhetoric : you want topics and tropes and figures.

Epictetus. I have no room for them. They make such a buzz in the house, a man's own wife cannot understand what he says to her.

Seneca. Let us reason a little upon style. I

would set you right, and remove from before you the prejudices of a somewhat rustic education. We may adorn the simplicity of the wisest.

Epictetus. Thou canst not adorn simplicity. What is naked or defective is susceptible of decoration: what is decorated is simplicity no longer. Thou mayest give another thing in exchange for it; but if thou wert master of it, thou wouldst preserve it inviolate. It is no wonder that we mortals, little able as we are to see truth, should be less able to express it.

Seneca. You have formed at present no idea of style.

Epictetus. I never think about it. First I consider whether what I am about to say is true; then whether I can say it with brevity, in such a manner as that others shall see it as clearly as I do in the light of truth; for if they survey it as an ingenuity, my desire is ungratified, my duty unfulfilled. I go not with those who dance round the image of Truth, less out of honour to her than to display their agility and address.

Seneca. We must attract the attention of readers by novelty and force and grandeur of expression.

Epictetus. We must. Nothing is so grand as truth, nothing so forcible, nothing so novel.

Seneca. Sonorous sentences are wanted, to awaken the lethargy of indolence.

Epictetus. Awaken it to what? Here lies the question; and a weighty one it is. If thou awakenest men where they can see nothing and do no work, it is better to let them rest: but will not they, thinkest thou, look up at a rainbow, unless they are called to it by a clap of thunder?

Seneca. Your early youth, Epictetus, has been

I will not say neglected, but cultivated with rude instruments and unskilful hands.

Epictetus. I thank God for it. Those rude instruments have left the turf lying yet toward the sun; and those unskilful hands have plucked out the docks.

Seneca. We hope and believe that we have attained a vein of eloquence, brighter and more varied than has been hitherto laid open to the world.

Epictetus. Than any in the Greek?

Seneca. We trust so.

Epictetus. Than your Cicero's?

Seneca. If the declaration may be made without an offence to modesty. Surely you cannot estimate or value the eloquence of that noble pleader.

Epictetus. Imperfectly; not being born in Italy; and the noble pleader is a much less man with me than the noble philosopher. I regret that having farms and villas, he would not keep his distance from the pumping up of foul words, against thieves, cut-throats, and other rogues: and that he lied, sweated, and thumped his head and thighs, in behalf of those who were no better.

Seneca. Senators must have clients, and must protect them.

Epictetus. Innocent or guilty?

Seneca. Doubtless.

Epictetus. If it becomes a philosopher to regret at all, and if I regret what is, and might not be, I may regret more what both is and must be. However it is an amiable thing, and no small merit in the wealthy, even to trifle and play at their leisure hours with philosophy. It cannot

be expected that such a personage should espouse her, or should recommend her as an inseparable mate to his heir.

Seneca. I would.

Epictetus. Yes, Seneca, but thou hast no son to make the match for; and thy recommendation, I suspect, would be given him before he could consummate the marriage. Every man wishes his sons to be philosophers while they are young; but takes especial care, as they grow older, to teach them its insufficiency and unfitness for their intercourse with mankind. The paternal voice says, 'You must not be particular: you are about to have a profession to live by: follow those who have thriven the best in it.' Now among these, whatever be the profession, canst thou point out to me one single philosopher?

Seneca. Not just now. Nor, upon reflection, do I think it feasible.

Epictetus. Thou indeed mayest live much to thy ease and satisfaction with philosophy, having (they say) two thousand talents.

Seneca. And a trifle to spare . . pressed upon me by that godlike youth, my pupil Nero.

Epictetus. Seneca! where God hath placed a mine, he hath placed the materials of an earthquake.

Seneca. A true philosopher is beyond the reach of Fortune.

Epictetus. The false one thinks himself so. Fortune cares little about philosophers; but she remembers where she hath set a rich man, and she laughs to see the Destinies at his door.

RHADAMISTUS AND ZENOBIA

Zenobia. My beloved! my beloved! I can endure the motion of the horse no longer; his weariness makes his pace so tiresome to me. Surely we have ridden far, very far from home; and how shall we ever pass the wide and rocky stream, among the whirlpools of the rapid and the deep Araxes? From the first sight of it, O my husband! you have been silent: you have looked at me at one time intensely, at another wildly: have you mistaken the road? or the ford? or the ferry?

Rhadamistus. Tired, tired! did I say? ay, thou must be. Here thou shalt rest: this before us is the place for it. Alight; drop into my arms: art thou within them?

Zenobia. Always in fear for me, my tender thoughtful Rhadamistus!

Rhadamistus. Rhadamistus then once more embraces his Zenobia!

Zenobia. And presses her to his bosom as with the first embrace.

Rhadamistus. What is the first to the last!

Zenobia. Nay, this is not the last.

Rhadamistus. Not quite, (O agony!) not quite; once more.

Zenobia. So: with a kiss: which you forget to take.

Rhadamistus (*aside*). And shall this shake my purpose? it may my limbs, my heart, my brain; but what my soul so deeply determined, it shall strengthen: as winds do trees in forests.

Zenobia. Come, come! cheer up. How good you are to be persuaded by me: back again at one word! Hark! where are those drums and bugles? on which side are these echoes?

Rhadamistus. Alight, dear, dear Zenobia! And does Rhadamistus then press thee to his bosom? Can it be?

Zenobia. *Can it cease to be?* you would have said, my Rhadamistus! Hark! again those trumpets? on which bank of the water are they? Now they seem to come from the mountains, and now along the river. Men's voices too! threats and yells! You, my Rhadamistus, could escape.

Rhadamistus. Wherefore? with whom? and whither in all Asia?

Zenobia. Fly! there are armed men climbing up the cliffs.

Rhadamistus. It was only the sound of the waves in the hollows of them, and the masses of pebbles that rolled down from under you as you knelt to listen.

Zenobia. Turn round; look behind! is it dust yonder, or smoke? and is it the sun, or what is it, shining so crimson? not shining any longer now, but deep and dull purple, embodying into gloom.

Rhadamistus. It is the sun, about to set at midday; we shall soon see no more of him.

Zenobia. Indeed! what an ill omen! but how can you tell that? Do you think it? I do not. Alas! alas! the dust and the sounds are nearer.

Rhadamistus. Prepare then, my Zenobia!

Zenobia. I was always prepared for it.

Rhadamistus. What reason, O unconfiding girl! from the day of our union, have I ever given you, to accuse, or to suspect me?

Zenobia. None, none: your love, even in these sad moments, raises me above the reach of fortune. How can it pain me so? Do I repine? Worse may it pain me; but let that love never pass away!

Rhadamistus. Was it then the loss of power and kingdom for which Zenobia was prepared?

Zenobia. The kingdom was lost when Rhadamistus lost the affection of his subjects. Why did they not love you? how could they not? Tell me so strange a thing.[1]

Rhadamistus. Fables, fables! about the death of Mithridates and his children: declamations, outcries: as if it were as easy to bring men to life again as . . I know not what . . to call after them.

Zenobia. But about the children?

Rhadamistus. In all governments there are secrets.

Zenobia. Between us?

Rhadamistus. No longer: time presses: not a moment is left us, not a refuge, not a hope!

Zenobia. Then why draw the sword?

Rhadamistus. Wanted I courage? did I not fight as becomes a king?

Zenobia. True, most true.

Rhadamistus. Is my resolution lost to me? did I but dream I had it?

Zenobia. Nobody is very near yet; nor can they cross the dell where we did. Those are fled who could have shown the pathway. Think not of defending me. Listen! look! what

[1] From the seclusion of the Asiatic women, Zenobia may be supposed to have been ignorant of the crimes Rhadamistus had committed.

thousands are coming! The protecting blade above my head can only provoke the enemy. And do you still keep it there? You grasp my arm too hard. Can you look unkindly? Can it be? O think again and spare me, Rhadamistus! From the vengeance of man, from the judgments of heaven, the unborn may preserve my husband.

Rhadamistus. We must die! They advance; they see us; they rush forward!

Zenobia. Me, me would you strike? Rather let me leap from the precipice.

Rhadamistus. Hold! Whither would thy desperation? Art thou again within my grasp?

Zenobia. O my beloved! never let me call you cruel! let me love you in the last hour of seeing you as in the first. I must, I must . . and be it my thought in death that you love me so! I would have cast away my life to save you from remorse: it may do that and more, preserved by you. Listen! listen! among those who pursue us there are many fathers; childless by his own hand, none. Do not kill our baby . . the best of our hopes when we had many . . the baby not yet ours! Who shall then plead for you, my unhappy husband?

Rhadamistus. My honour; and before me, sole arbiter and sole audience of our cause. Bethink thee, Zenobia, of the indignities . . not bearing on my fortunes . . but imminent over thy beauty! What said I? did I bid thee think of them? Rather die than imagine, or than question me, what they are! Let me endure two deaths before my own, crueller than wounds or than age or than servitude could inflict on me, rather than make me name them.

Zenobia. Strike! Lose not a moment so precious! Why hesitate now my generous brave defender?

Rhadamistus. Zenobia! dost thou bid it?

Zenobia. Courage is no longer a crime in you. Hear the shouts, the threats, the imprecations! Hear them, my beloved! let *me* no more!

Rhadamistus. Embrace me not, Zenobia! loose me, loose me!

Zenobia. I cannot: thrust me away! Divorce . . but with death . . the disobedient wife, no longer your Zenobia. (*He strikes.*) Oh! oh! one innocent head . . in how few days . . should have reposed . . no, not upon this blood. Swim across! is there a descent . . an easy one, a safe one, anywhere? I might have found it for you! ill-spent time! heedless woman!

Rhadamistus. An arrow hath pierced me: more are showering round us. Go, my life's flower! the blighted branch drops after. Away! forth into the stream! strength is yet left me for it. (*He throws her into the river.*) She sinks not! O last calamity! She sinks! she sinks! Now both are well, and fearless! One look more! grant one more look! On what? where was it? which whirl? which ripple? they are gone too. How calm is the haven of the most troubled life! I enter it! Rebels! traitors! slaves! subjects! why gape ye? why halt ye? On, on, dastards! Oh that ye dared to follow! (*He plunges armed into the Araxes.*)

MAHOMET AND SERGIUS

Mahomet. Thou knowest, my dear Sergius, that heretofore the bishops of Rome have conferred and counselled on the necessity of depriving the priesthood of marriage, that the brethren may be devoted to them entirely, and insulated from the people.

Sergius. Such a scheme indeed hath been agitated more than once; yet I suspect it can never be carried into execution. If the Roman pontiff should succeed in his intentions, would the Greek follow?

Mahomet. There hath always been jealousy between them, of each other's weight and authority.

Sergius. It began about dresses and jewels, then flamed forth again on the comparative number of rich widows and holy virgins, in the convents of East and West. As beauty and embroidery, music and mutilation, are matters of taste and opinion, they looked for something to split upon decorously. An iota served: this iota clove many thousand skulls, and found nothing. Latterly they have fought upon surer ground, over the relics of confessors and martyrs, and, in time of truce, have bidden high against each other for the best odour of sanctity any Jew or Arab would bring them.

Mahomet. I myself keep in reserve the thigh-bone of an honest jade of a mule; the fellow of which thigh-bone is inclosed in a glass case at Ancona, as belonging to Saint Eufemia. My saint was rather a wincing one. I should not have liked

to put my muzzle quite so near her crupper, in her state of probation, as the faithful do now she is canonised. I introduced oil of amomum, a perfume unknown among the Italians, into both bones. The first, like a fool, I sold for three hundred gold pieces: the remaining one shall bring me, with God's help, five hundred: proving its authenticity by identity of odour, and thus confounding the sceptic and scoffer. If men are wilfully blind, let them remain so: they shall fall into the ditch when there is none to help them. In vain does the cresset shine from the tower, if the perverse will run upon the shoals and rocks. In vain does the cryer's voice cry 'God is great,' if we hang back and budge, and will not lend him even our little finger, to try a portion of his strength thereon. But he saith, 'I am a sword to the wicked, and a shield to the good, and a mountain-encampment fed with living waters, to him and him only who placeth his trust in me.' Thus saith the strong and merciful, whose name be praised evermore, through his servant, the dust of his feet. 'Did I not,' saith he, 'hide the prophet Jonas three days and three nights in the whale's belly? But my prophet Mahomet, whom I have chosen to be cover and clasp, pumice-stone and thong, to the book of prophecy, hath lain three times three in a locust's.'

Sergius. Quiet! quiet! never say that! The Catholics will think either that thou mockest or that thou surpassest their impudence, and will stone thee.

Mahomet. I will preach where there are no stones big enough.

Sergius. They will crucify thee.

Mahomet. I will preach where there are no trees high enough.

Sergius. They will burn thee alive.

Mahomet. I will preach where they shall be burnt alive themselves if they come near me, and without a faggot, a wisp of straw, or a match. Men are very humane in the desert: it is only where there are meadows and cornfields, and young nuns and choristers, that the gadfly of persecution pricks them.

Sergius. Thou talkest reasonably again, dropping in thy phraseology from the third heaven of orientalism.

Mahomet. Leave me my third heaven: we agreed upon it.

Sergius. We will pick the mule's thigh-bone together.

Mahomet. My mule, I promise thee, Sergius, shall carry both of us the first stage on our journey.

Again to business.

If my introduction is somewhat long, it is only that I may smoothen the path to arrangements of great advantage to thee, unoffered and unpremeditated in any former conversation. Although the Greeks had the earliest and best claim to supremacy, if indeed the Christian dispensation could admit any (which the first Roman bishops denied), the Emperor Mauritius wished the patriarch of Constantinople to possess it, that something like order might at length be established in his extensive and loose dominions, and that the lust of ecclesiastical power might be controlled by the presence of the imperial. This cost him his life from the pope, who himself did not live

long enough to gather the fruits he had engrafted with so skilful and sharp a knife. Popes trip up one another, like children on the icy streets of Cyzicus. Gregory and Sabinian followed in rapid march: then came Bonifacius, who found on the throne Phocas, the murderer of his emperor and patron. Never were two such men so well met; they upheld one another; and Rome from that time forward hath preserved the authority she usurped. She hath always been an auxiliary of the audacious and the unjust, knowing that they pay best and promise most, and that right and equity, peace and honour, want nothing and expect nothing at her hands. Her thunders are composed from chaos; her light from the fragments of civilisation and the flames of war. We will take advantage of the weakness that wickedness leaves behind it, and of the hatred and contempt in which papal ambition is holden through Greece and Asia.

Sergius. I hope the Roman pontiff may at least order the priests to observe celibacy, if he does not subject them to another ceremony, taken, like the greater part of their worship, from the ancient rites of Cybele. An excellent regimen for priests! but it would ruin monachism.

Mahomet. So far is the Greek church from a desire to imitate the Roman, that I am well convinced she would, for contradiction, instantly order both priests and monks to marry. On this principle, in my institutions I am resolved to allow four wives to every man. In order to strengthen the oriental church against the occidental, and that you never may suppose I would take an undue advantage of you, I recommend

that you should prove from the Scriptures how every tenth girl belongs to the religious, as clearly as every tenth lamb and wheat-sheaf, and that monks are more religious than priests.

Sergius. Thou canst not prove the former.

Mahomet. Nor thou ?

Sergius. No.

Mahomet. Nor both together ?

Sergius. I question it.

Mahomet. O thou infidel ! the Scriptures contain everything.

Sergius. I have no mind, friend Mahomet, they should contain this. I will never have ten wives, nor four, nor any : and, if the Œcumenical bishop orders those under his authority to repudiate theirs, certain I am that our church will exhort and command every priest, and perhaps every monk, to take one.

Mahomet. Well ! what harm ?

Sergius. Short-sighted mortal ! what harm indeed ! If she bids us have wives of our own, she will shortly come to such a pass that she will bid us have none *but* our own : a grievous detriment to the vital interests of the faith.

Mahomet, thou art the heartiest laugher under heaven. Prythee let thy beard cover thy throat again. There now ! thy turban has fallen behind thee. Art thou in fits ? By my soul, I will lay this thong across thy loins, if thou tossest and screamest in such a manner, to the scandal of the monastery.

Mahomet. Words are magical. The blindest and tenderest young saintling that ever was whelped could not have whined so pathetically, 'A grievous, detriment to the vital interests of the faith ! '

Sergius. There is a time for all things. Now a serious word with thee.

Mahomet. Let me hear it.

Sergius. Brother Pemphix, a worthy priest, hath espoused a beautiful creature. O the charms of such a friendship as mine with Pemphix! I am the confessor of the fair Anatolis. Ah, Mahomet! Mahomet! The delight of authority! the diviner power of persuasion! the glory of hearing the appeal, 'Now ought I, sweet Sergius?'

Mahomet. I discover all her beauty at those words.

Sergius. Perish then those words for ever! Her beauty ought to rest upon my heart, veiled and sacred: no thought should dwell with it, no idea rise from it, but mine.

Mahomet. Is she so very beauteous? Why sighest thou and maddenest and starest? Is there anything strange in the question? I never saw her nor heard of her.

Sergius. Anatolis is a star.

Mahomet. Bad!

Sergius. Heaven itself . . .

Mahomet. Worse and worse. She must be too much for thee.

Sergius. Peace, profane one! Anatolis is a rose . . .

Mahomet. Psha! they all are. God made the rose out of what was left of woman at the creation. The great difference is, we feel the rose's thorns when we gather it; and the other's when we have had it some time.

Sergius. The gales of Paradise breathe from this opening bud.

Mahomet. Gales never were given for one only

Sergius. The mild even-tempered Anatolis is the coyest and most difficult young creature ; and Pemphix complained to me about it, a few days after their union.

'Canst thou do nothing with her, brother Sergius ? Try, for the love of God ! Rouse thyself ! rouse thyself ! Be resolute ! be brotherly. Meditation is an excellent thing, but man was also made for action.'

Mahomet. In the plains of Damascus I myself am fain to take exercise. Many gales of Paradise blow about these gardens, and over the banks of these little streams. We have some pleasant spots in Arabia, more in Idumea ; but he who possesseth Syria may hold in contempt the possessors of all the earth beside. Love, and enjoy for ever, Anatolis : retain to thy last breath the pleasure of discoursing on her in confidence, and of forbidding thy friend to think about her ! Chide him if he mention her ; hate him if he ask nothing concerning her. If he smile, detest his impudence ; if he look grave, abhor his insensibility.

Sergius ! mayest thou long do thus ! Earth can afford thee, Heaven can promise thee, nothing more.

Sergius. Yet, Mahomet, on cooler thoughts, dear to me as is Anatolis, I am not disposed to resign the power and authority we should participate, and which I am weary of expecting.

Mahomet. Wait but a little while. Everything is most promising in Arabia. It is a difficult matter in my country to persuade the hearers even of our wildest stories that they are but fiction. Where there is such a thirst for the marvellous, it is easier to equip a new religion

than a new camel. We must be daring. In spite of thy advice, I am resolved to prove that I have been up in heaven.

Sergius. Take heed! take heed! they cannot believe that.

Mahomet. They will not believe a word of truth, until they believe many a falsehood. I must have witnesses.

Sergius. Here lies the difficulty. Let me send to Rome for them . . indeed to any part of Italy: it would ruin thee to purchase them here; the rogues are so exorbitant.

Mahomet. I will have them unbought, pure, sincere, steadfast. Heat an Arab, and he keeps hot for life. But, my dear Sergius, thou hast lived thy early days in Rome: art thou not fond of that city, so full of allurements?

Sergius. I was very fond of it.

Mahomet. Could nothing induce thee to return?

Sergius. Not now: thou knowest the reason.

Mahomet. The patriarchate of Constantinople is unworthy of thy ambition, now the Roman pontiff takes the precedency.

Sergius. He shall take it no longer when I am patriarch.

Mahomet. I should rather like, if convenient to Sergius, to extend my empire over the plains of Damascus; chiefly because this empire must be extended by the sword, which is tempered nowhere in such perfection as by the waters of Abbana and Pharphar.

Sergius. I demur to this.

Mahomet. I would engage to give thee in exchange the whole of Europe.

Sergius. Mahomet, thou art ambitious.

Mahomet. To serve my friend; otherwise, no mortal was ever so far removed from it. I have many other faults; none however which a friend can suffer from, or ought to see.

Sergius. Although I little doubt that any plausible new religion would subvert the old rottenness that lies accumulated around us, now that people find the priests of Christ assuming the garb and language of despots, with the temper and trade of executioners, yet it may be the labour of years to penetrate with an army from the centre of Arabia into this country.

Mahomet. Of two or three at most. I have had visions that promise me Syria.

Sergius. Mahomet, the system I laid down for thee contains no visions.

Mahomet. Many spring from it.

Sergius. Thou wouldst alter it, I see.

Mahomet. It was too pure: people have fed upon prodigies: they must have them still. Situate the native of a watery plain upon the mountain, and he will regret the warm comfortable fogs and the low fleeting lights of his marsh.

I would continue on the best terms with my adviser and guide; but verily my entrails yearn for the good people of Damascus.

Sergius. Leave them to me; and, if thy entrails yearn, take a goblet of cyprus.

Mahomet. I dare not drink wine: it aggravates my malady, the only one to which I am subject. Another inspiration here comes over me. I will forbid the use of this beverage. Why should others enjoy what I cannot?

Sergius. True religionist! But, Mahomet! Mahomet! will vision upon vision, revelation

upon revelation, supersede this delicious habit? Relinquish such an impracticable conceit. Forbid wine indeed! God himself, if he descended on earth, and commanded it in a louder and clearer voice than that at which the creation sprang forth, unless first he altered the composition both of body and soul, would utterly fail in this commandment.

Mahomet. I will order it: I will see it executed: for now thou urgest me. Yea, Sergius! men shall abstain from wine in all those regions of the earth where wine hath fragrance and captivation: and they shall continue to drink it and be damned where it is nauseous and fiery and Aethiopian in complexion: and the priests in those regions shall drink the most of it. Thus saith the Lord.

Sergius. He hath said many things which nobody minds. If whole nations abstain from wine, by any ordinance, prophetic or angelic, and from such wine as Syria and Cyprus and Chios and Crete afford us, there will be a miracle not resembling most others; no miracle of a moment, witnessed by the ignorant and run away with by the impostor, a sacrilege to examine; but a miracle to be touched and interrogated, as long, as attentively, as intrinsically, as the most incredulous could require, and such as all the world must acknowledge to be irresistible, and must bend before its divinity.

Mahomet. I do not desire all the world: let me have but Asia, if I can win it over to the faith.

Sergius. Win it over and welcome, if thou canst.

Mahomet. Faith is so strong in me, I can do all things.

Sergius. Do them: leave me Anatolis and the patriarchate, just as they both are now.

Mahomet. I begin to imagine and believe that many of those things which I would have communicated as visions, are realities.

Sergius. Thou wilt succeed the better for thinking it.

Mahomet. God guides us mysteriously and changes us miraculously.

Sergius. He doth indeed, if he hath made a religionist of thee.

Mahomet. 'God, he is God, and Mahomet is his prophet.' By the Eternal! those words are divine.

Sergius. They will be, by the Eternal! if they only win thee some three or four stout cities in Arabia, and deliver into thy hands, with some rich caravan, about as many (or rather more) unbelieving girls, ready and ripe for conversion and ablution, with faces a whit nearer in colour to the snow than to the sands; such as Paphlagonia and Armenia send us, by the blessing of the Lord.

Mahomet. Hitherto, when I dreamed that thou madest to me any cession of territory for the plantation of the faith, thou didst give me thy blessing and cede it.

Sergius. And thou didst to me in like manner. But now thy dreams cover nation after nation; let us agree, my friend Mahomet, to dream no more. Lie on thy left side, man, on thy noble camel-hair couch, white and black like a zebra (as thou boastest in thy poetry), and never turn thy face again toward Syria.

Mahomet. This seems, my friend, like a threat.

Sergius. Say rather, like divination.

Mahomet. I can divine better than thou canst.

Sergius. Contentment is better than divination or visions. Thou wert born and educated in Arabia: and nothing can transcend the description thou hast given me of thy native country.

Mahomet. All native countries are most beautiful; yet we want something from them which they will not give us. Our first quarrels of any seriousness are with them; as the first screams and struggles of infants, the first tearing of robes and sobs of anger, are against their mothers.

Delightful is it to bathe in the *moonsea* on the sands, and to listen to tales of genii in the tent: but then in Arabia the anxious heart is thrown into fierce and desperate commotion, by the accursed veil that separates beauty from us. There we never see the blade of that sweet herbage rise day after day into light and loveliness, never see the blossom expand; but receive it unselected, unsolicited, and unwon. Happy the land where the youthful are without veils, the aged without suspicion; where the antelope may look to what resting-place she listeth, and bend her slender foot to the fountain that most invites her.

Odoriferous gales! whether of Deban or of Dafar, if ye bring only fragrance with you, carry it to the thoughtless and light-hearted! carry it to the drinker of wine, to the feaster and the dancer at the feast. If ye never have played about the beloved of my youth, if ye bring me no intelligence of her, pass on! away with you!

Sergius. We may be with the girl we love in many places; so many, that we lose the recollection.

Mahomet. Is that possible ? Then you do not sit very near her.

Sergius. Yes, and touch her.

Mahomet. A young girl ? beautiful ? affectionate ? before marriage ? Do not nod, but tell me unequivocally.

Sergius. I say it.

Mahomet. Sergius ! thy whole religion, in all its incredibilities, containeth none like this.

Sergius. Believe me ; I am not preaching. Certainly we have much the advantage here ; but thou mayest order things after our manner.

Mahomet. I shall grow old before this change can take place : beside, I must have a revelation for it.

Sergius. And why not ?

Mahomet. Alas ! it is not worth my while. However, I am hale enough yet to make another visit to Damascus.

Sergius. As a preacher, I hope, not as a prophet.

Mahomet. God's will be done.

Sergius. If thou, in spite of thy faith, shouldst yet happen to fail in thy enterprise, come into our brotherhood : if, in despite of thy rashness, thou shouldst succeed in it, thy friend Sergius follows thy standard, and brings over to thee nine-tenths of the church-establishment. But do not omit the Houris. Quote Solomon ; celebrate his wisdom and concubines ; damn his idolatry of wood and stone when he had flesh and blood to idolize ; grant sherbet and coffee, opium and divorces. Remember . .

Hark ! the bell rings ! Put on thy slippers, come along with me. Curtsey to the Virgin, dip thy finger in the font, and chaunt the litany.

Mahomet. I never sang a note in my whole life.

Sergius. What matters that? Courage! strike up among us.

Mahomet. I hate singing: it is fit only for madmen and drunkards and the weakest and pettiest of the birds. Beside, I tell thee again, I cannot. Are there not reasons enough?

Sergius. By no means. Didst thou not say, faith is so strong in thee, thou canst do all things?

Mahomet. Yes, but I must have the will first: even God must will before he does anything: I am only his Prophet. Why dost thou laugh? why dost thou display thy teeth, lifting and lowering them like unto the dog that biteth off his fleas? No ridicule! I deserve it not. My potency is know to thee, although not in its whole extent. Know then, I have cut the moon asunder with my scimitar.

Sergius. Who, in the name of the Prophet (this I think is the way we are to speak), will ever believe such an audacious lie?

Mahomet. Universally will the chosen of the Most High believe it, although the grunters and snorers in thy sty eschew it. I have in readiness a miracle so much greater, that every face in Arabia will sink as deep in the sand before it as the tortoise when she is laying her eggs.

Sergius. I do not understand thee.

Mahomet. It is something to cut asunder the moon: but I have already done incalculably more, as thou thyself, O Sergius, shalt acknowledge.

Sergius. Speak, and plainly; for, upon my soul! I know not when thou art in earnest and when otherwise; and almost do I suspect that, in the illusions of hope and in the transports of ambition,

thou sometimes givest credence to thine own devices.

Mahomet. Be thou my judge in this matter. Under an oath to secrecy, I have unfolded to Labid the poet, son of Rabiah, what I intend for the first chapter of my Koran: and he cried before me, and is ready to cry before the people, 'O Mahomet! son of Abdallah, son of Achem, son of Motalib, thou art a greater poet than I am.'

Sergius. Begone upon thy mission this instant! Miracles like others have been performed everywhere; like this, never upon earth. A poet, good or bad, to acknowledge a superior! Methinks I see the pope already in adoration at thy feet, and hear the patriarchs calling thee father. I myself am half a convert. Hie thee homeward: God speed thee!

LEOFRIC AND GODIVA

Godiva. There is a dearth in the land, my sweet Leofric! Remember how many weeks of drought we have had, even in the deep pastures of Leicestershire; and how many Sundays we have heard the same prayers for rain, and supplications that it would please the Lord in his mercy to turn aside his anger from the poor pining cattle. You, my dear husband, have imprisoned more than one malefactor for leaving his dead ox in the public way; and other hinds have fled before you out of the traces, in which they and their sons and their daughters, and haply their old fathers and mothers, were dragging the abandoned wain homeward.

Although we were accompanied by many brave spearmen and skilful archers, it was perilous to pass the creatures which the farm-yard dogs, driven from the hearth by the poverty of their masters, were tearing and devouring; while others, bitten and lamed, filled the air either with long and deep howls or sharp and quick barkings, as they struggled with hunger and feebleness or were exasperated by heat and pain. Nor could the thyme from the heath, nor the bruised branches of the fir-tree, extinguish or abate the foul odour.

Leofric. And now, Godiva my darling, thou art afraid we should be eaten up before we enter the gates of Coventry; or perchance that in the gardens there are no roses to greet thee, no sweet herbs for thy mat and pillow.

Godiva. Leofric, I have no such fears. This is the month of roses: I find them everywhere since my blessed marriage: they, and all other sweet herbs, I know not why, seem to greet me wherever I look at them, as though they knew and expected me. Surely they cannot feel that I am fond of them.

Leofric. O light laughing simpleton! But what wouldst thou? I came not hither to pray; and yet if praying would satisfy thee, or remove the drought, I would ride up straightway to Saint Michael's and pray until morning.

Godiva. I would do the same, O Leofric! but God hath turned away his ear from holier lips than mine. Would my own dear husband hear me, if I implored him for what is easier to accomplish? what he can do like God.

Leofric. How! what is it?

Godiva. I would not, in the first hurry of your

wrath, appeal to you, my loving lord, in behalf of these unhappy men who have offended you.

Leofric. Unhappy! is that all?

Godiva. Unhappy they must surely be, to have offended you so grievously. What a soft air breathes over us! how quiet and serene and still an evening! how calm are the heavens and the earth! shall none enjoy them? not even we, my Leofric? The sun is ready to set: let it never set, O Leofric, on your anger. These are not my words; they are better than mine; should they lose their virtue from my unworthiness in uttering them?

Leofric. Godiva, wouldst thou plead to me for rebels?

Godiva They have then drawn the sword against you! Indeed I knew it not.

Leofric. They have omitted to send me my dues, established by my ancestors, well knowing of our nuptials, and of the charges and festivities they require, and that in a season of such scarcity my own lands are insufficient.

Godiva. If they were starving, as they said they were . . .

Leofric. Must I starve too? Is it not enough to lose my vassals?

Godiva. Enough! O God! too much! too much! may you never lose them! Give them life, peace, comfort, contentment. There are those among them who kissed me in my infancy, and who blessed me at the baptismal font. Leofric, Leofric! the first old man I meet I shall think is one of those; and I shall think on the blessing he gave, and (ah me!) on the blessing I bring back to him. My heart will bleed, will burst . . and he will

weep at it! he will weep, poor soul! for the wife of a cruel lord who denounces vengeance on him, who carries death into his family.

Leofric. We must hold solemn festivals.

Godiva. We must indeed.

Leofric. Well then.

Godiva. Is the clamorousness that succeeds the death of God's dumb creatures, are crowded halls, are slaughtered cattle, festivals? are maddening songs and giddy dances, and hireling praises from parti-coloured coats? Can the voice of a minstrel tell us better things of ourselves than our own internal one might tell us; or can his breath make our breath softer in sleep? O my beloved! let everything be a joyance to us: it will, if we will. Sad is the day, and worse must follow, when we hear the blackbird in the garden and do not throb with joy. But, Leofric, the high festival is strown by the servant of God upon the heart of man. It is gladness, it is thanksgiving; it is the orphan, the starveling, pressed to the bosom, and bidden as its first commandment to remember its benefactor. We will hold this festival; the guests are ready: we may keep it up for weeks, and months, and years together, and always be the happier and the richer for it. The beverage of this feast, O Leofric, is sweeter than bee or flower or vine can give us: it flows from heaven; and in heaven will it abundantly be poured out again, to him who pours it out here unsparingly.

Leofric. Thou art wild.

Godiva. I have indeed lost myself. Some Power, some good kind Power, melts me (body and soul and voice) into tenderness and love.

O, my husband, we must obey it. Look upon me! look upon me! lift your sweet eyes from the ground! I will not cease to supplicate; I dare not.

Leofric. We may think upon it.

Godiva. Never say that! What! think upon goodness when you can be good? Let not the infants cry for sustenance! The mother of our blessed Lord will hear them; us never, never afterward.

Leofric. Here comes the bishop: we are but one mile from the walls. Why dismountest thou? no bishop can expect it. Godiva! my honour and rank among men are humbled by this: Earl Godwin will hear of it: up! up! the bishop hath seen it: he urgeth his horse onward: dost thou not hear him now upon the solid turf behind thee? . . . . . .

Godiva. Never, no, never will I rise, O Leofric, until you remit this most impious tax, this tax on hard labour, on hard life.

Leofric. Turn round: look how the fat nag canters, as to the tune of a sinner's psalm, slow and hard-breathing. What reason or right can the people have to complain, while their bishop's steed is so sleek and well caparisoned? Inclination to change, desire to abolish old usages . . . Up! up! for shame! They shall smart for it, idlers! Sir bishop, I must blush for my young bride.

Godiva. My husband, my husband! will you pardon the city? . . .

Leofric. Sir bishop! I could not think you would have seen her in this plight. Will I pardon? yea, Godiva, by the holy rood, will I pardon the city, when thou ridest naked at noontide through the streets.

Godiva. O my dear cruel Leofric, where is the heart you gave me! It was not so! can mine have hardened it?

Bishop. Earl, thou abashest thy spouse; she turneth pale and weepeth. Lady Godiva, peace be with thee.

Godiva. Thanks, holy man! peace will be with me when peace is with your city. Did you hear my lord's cruel word?

Bishop. I did, lady.

Godiva. Will you remember it, and pray against it?

Bishop. Wilt *thou* forget it, daughter?

Godiva. I am not offended.

Bishop. Angel of peace and purity!

Godiva. But treasure it up in your heart: deem it an incense, good only when it is consumed and spent, ascending with prayer and sacrifice. And now what was it?

Bishop. Christ save us! that he will pardon the city when thou ridest naked through the streets at noon.

Godiva. Did he not swear an oath?

Bishop. He sware by the holy rood.

Godiva. My Redeemer! thou hast heard it! save the city!

Leofric. We are now upon the beginning of the pavement: these are the suburbs: let us think of feasting: we may pray afterward: to-morrow we shall rest.

Godiva. No judgments then to-morrow, Leofric?

Leofric. None: we will carouse.

Godiva. The saints of heaven have given me strength and confidence: my prayers are heard: the heart of my beloved is now softened.

Leofric (*aside*). Ay, ay . . they shall smart, though.

Godiva. Say, dearest Leofric, is there indeed no other hope, no other mediation ?

Leofric. I have sworn : beside, thou hast made me redden and turn my face away from thee, and all the knaves have seen it : this adds to the city's crime.

Godiva. I have blushed too, Leofric, and was not rash nor obdurate.

Leofric. But thou, my sweetest, art given to blushing ; there is no conquering it in thee. I wish thou hadst not alighted so hastily and roughly : it hath shaken down a sheaf of thy hair : take heed thou sit not upon it, lest it anguish thee. Well done ! it mingleth now sweetly with the cloth of gold upon the saddle, running here and there, as if it had life and faculties and business, and were working thereupon some newer and cunninger device. O my beauteous Eve ! there is a Paradise about thee ! the world is refreshed as thou movest and breathest on it. I cannot see or think of evil where thou art. I could throw my arms even here about thee. No signs for me ! no shaking of sunbeams ! no reproof or frown or wonderment . . . I *will* say it . . . now then for worse . . . I could close with my kisses thy half-open lips, ay, and those lovely and loving eyes, before the people.

Godiva. To-morrow you shall kiss me, and they shall bless you for it. I shall be very pale, for to-night I must fast and pray.

Leofric. I do not hear thee ; the voices of the folk are so loud under this archway.

Godiva (*to herself*). God help them ! good kind

souls! I hope they will not crowd about me so to-morrow. O Leofric! could my name be forgotten! and yours alone remembered! But perhaps my innocence may save me from reproach! and how many as innocent are in fear and famine! No eye will open on me but fresh from tears. What a young mother for so large a family! Shall my youth harm me! Under God's hand it gives me courage. Ah, when will the morning come! ah, when will the noon be over!

TANCREDI[1] AND CONSTANTIA

Constantia. Is this in mockery, sir? Do you place me under a canopy, and upon what (no doubt) you presume to call a throne, for derision?

Tancredi. Madonna! if it never were a throne before, henceforward let none approach it but with reverence. The greatest, the most virtuous, of queens and empresses (it were indecorous in such an inferior as I am to praise in your presence aught else in you that raises men's admiration) leaves a throne for homage wherever she has rested.

Constantia. Count Tancredi! your past conduct ill accords with your present speech. Your courtesy, great as it is, would have been much greater, if you yourself had taken me captive, and had not turned your horse and rode back, on purpose that villainous hands might seize me.

[1] Tancredi was crowned 1190, and died of grief at the loss of his only son, 1194. Constantia, daughter of William II of Sicily, was married to the Emperor Henry VI.

Tancredi. Knightly hands (I speak it with all submission) are not villainous. I could not in my heart command you to surrender; and I would not deprive a brave man, a man distinguished for deference and loyalty, of the pleasure he was about to enjoy in encountering your two barons. I am confident he never was discourteous.

Constantia. He was; he took my horse's bridle by the bit, turned his back on me, and would not let me go.

Tancredi. War sometimes is guilty of such enormities, and even worse.

Constantia. I would rather have surrendered myself to the most courageous knight in Italy.

Tancredi. Which may that be?

Constantia. By universal consent, Tancredi, Count of Lecce.

Tancredi. To possess the highest courage, is but small glory; to be without it, is a great disgrace.

Constantia. Loyalty, not only to ladies, but to princes, is the true and solid foundation of it. Count of Lecce! am I not the daughter of your king?

Tancredi. I recognise in the Lady Constantia the daughter of our late sovran lord, King William, of glorious memory.

Constantia. Recognise then your queen.

Tancredi. Our laws, and the supporters of these laws, forbid it.

Constantia. Is that memory a glorious one, as you call it, which a single year is sufficient to erase? And did not my father nominate me his heir?

Tancredi. A kingdom is not among the chattels of a king: a people is paled within laws, and

not within parks and chases: the powerfullest have no privilege to sport in that enclosure. The barons of the realm and the knights and the people assembled in Palermo, and there by acclamation called and appointed me to govern the state. Certainly the Lady Constantia is nearer to the throne in blood, and much worthier: I said so then. The unanimous reply was that Sicily should be independent of all other lands, and that neither German Kings nor Roman Emperors should control her.

Constantia. You must be aware, sir, that an armed resistance to the Emperor is presumptuous and traitorous.

Tancredi. He has carried fire and sword into my country, and has excited the Genoese and Pisans, men speaking the same language as ourselves, to debark on our coasts, to demolish our villages, and to consume our harvests.

Constantia. Being a sovran, he possesses the undoubted right.

Tancredi. Being a Sicilian, I have no less a right to resist him.

Constantia. Right? Do rights appertain to vassals?

Tancredi. Even to them; and this one particularly. Were I still a vassal, I should remember that I am a king by election, by birth a Sicilian, and by descent a Norman.

Constantia. All these fine titles give no right whatever to the throne, from which an insuperable bar precludes you.

Tancredi. What bar can there be which my sword and my people's love are unable to bear down?

Constantia. Excuse my answer.

Tancredi. Deign me one, I entreat you, Madonna! although the voice of my country may be more persuasive with me even than yours.

Constantia. Count Lecce! you are worthy of all honour, excepting that alone which can spring only from lawful descent.

Tancredi. My father was the first-born of the Norman conqueror, king of Sicily: my mother, in her own right, countess of Lecce. I have no reason to blush at my birth; nor did ever the noble breast which gave me nourishment heave with a sense of ignominy as she pressed me to it. She thought the blessing of the poor equivalent to the blessing of the priest.

Constantia. I would not refer to her ungently: but she by her alliance set at nought our Holy Father.

Tancredi. In all her paths, in all her words and actions, she obeyed him.

Constantia. Our Holy Father?

Tancredi. Our holiest, our only holy one, 'our Father which is in heaven.' She wants no apology: precedent is nothing: but remember our ancestors: I say *ours*; for I glory in the thought that they are the same, and so near. Among the early dukes of Normandy, vanquishers of France, and (what is greater) conquerors of England, fewer were born within the pale of wedlock than without. Nevertheless the ladies of our nation were always as faithful to love and duty, as if hoods and surplices and psalms had gone before them, and the church had been the vestibule to the bedchamber.

Constantia. My cousin the countess was irre-

proachable, and her virtues have rendered you as popular as your exploits.

Who is this pretty boy who holds down his head so, with the salver in his hand ?

Tancredi. He is my son.

Constantia. Why then does he kneel before me ?

Tancredi. To teach his father his duty.

Constantia. You acknowledge the rights of my husband ?

Tancredi. To a fairer possession than fair Sicily.

Constantia. I must no longer hear this language.

Tancredi. I utter it from the depths of a heart as pure as the coldest.

Constantia (*to the boy*). Yes, my sweet child ! I accept the refreshments you have been holding so patiently and present so gracefully. But you should have risen from your knees ; such a posture is undue to a captive.

Boy. Papa ! what did the lady say ? Do you ever make ladies captives ?

(*To Constantia*). Run away : I will hold his hands for him.

Constantia. I intend to run away ; but you are quite as dangerous as your father. Count ! you must name my ransom.

Tancredi. Madonna, I received it when you presented your royal hand to my respectful homage. The barons who accompanied you are mounted at the door, in order to reconduct you ; and the most noble and the most venerable of mine will be proud of the same permission.

Constantia. I also am a Sicilian, Tancredi ! I also am sensible to the glories of the Norman race. Never shall my husband, if I have any

influence over him, be the enemy of so courteous a knight. I could almost say, prosper! prosper! for the defence, the happiness, the example, of our Sicily.

Tancredi. We may be deprived of territory and power; but never of knighthood. The brave alone can merit it, the brave alone can confer it, the recreant alone can lose it. So long as there is Norman blood in my veins I am a knight: and our blood and our knighthood are given us to defend the sex. Insensate! I had almost said the weaker! and with your eyes before me!

Constantia. He cannot be a rebel, nor a false bad man.

Tancredi. Lady! the sword which I humbly lay at your feet was, a few years ago, a black misshapen mass of metal: the gold that surrounds it, the jewel that surmounts it, the victories it hath gained, constitute now its least value; it owes the greatest to its position.

WILLIAM WALLACE AND KING EDWARD I

Edward. Whom seest thou here?

Wallace. The King of England.

Edward. And thou abasest not thy head before the majesty of the sceptre!

Wallace. I did.

Edward. I marked it not.

Wallace. God beheld it when I did it; and he knoweth, as doth King Edward, how devoutly in my heart's strength I fought for it.

Edward. Robber! for what sceptre! Who commissioned thee?

Wallace. My country.

Edward. Thou liest: there is no country where there is no king.

Wallace. Sir, it were unbecoming to ask in this palace, why there is no king in my country.

Edward. To spare thy modesty then, I will inform thee. Because the kingdom is mine. Thou hast rebelled against me: thou hast presumed even to carry arms against both of those nobles, Bruce and Cummin, who contended for the Scottish throne, and with somewhat indeed of lawyers' likelihood.

Wallace. They placed the Scottish throne under the English.

Edward. Audacious churl! is it not meet?

Wallace. In Scotland we think otherwise.

Edward. Rebels do, subverters of order, low ignorant knaves, without any stake in the country. It hath pleased God to bless my arms: what further manifestation of our just claims demandest thou? Silence becomes thee.

Wallace. Where God is named. What is now to the right bank of a river, is to the left when we have crossed it and look round.

Edward. Thou wouldst be witty truly! Who was wittiest, thou or I, when thy companion Menteith delivered thee into my hands?

Wallace. Unworthy companions are not the peculiar curse of private men. I chose not Menteith for his treachery, nor rewarded him for it. Sir, I have contended with you face to face; but would not here: your glory eclipses mine, if this be glory.

Edward. So, thou wouldst place thyself on a level with princes!

Wallace. Willingly, if they attacked my country; and above them.

Edward. Dost thou remember the Carron-side, when your army was beaten and dispersed?

Wallace. By the defection of Cummin and the arrogance of Stuart.

Edward. Recollectest thou the colloquy that Bruce condescended to hold with thee across the river?

Wallace. I do, sir. Why would not he, being your soldier, and fighting loyally against his native land, pass the water, and exterminate an army so beaten and dispersed? The saddle-skirts had been rather the stiffer on the morrow, but he might have never felt them. Why not finish the business at once?

Edward. He wished to persuade thee, loose reviler, that thy resistance was useless.

Wallace. He might have made himself heard better if he had come across.

Edward. No trifling; no arguing with me; no remarks here, caitiff! Thou canst not any longer be ignorant that he hath slain his competitor, Cummin; that my troops surround him; and that he perhaps may now repent the levity of his reproaches against thee. I may myself have said a hasty word or two . . but thou hast nettled me. My anger soon passes. I never punish in an enemy anything else than obstinacy. I did not counsel the accusations and malignant taunts of Bruce.

Wallace. Sir, I do not bear them in mind.

Edward. No?

Wallace. Indeed I neither do nor would.

Edward. Dull wretch! I should never forget such. I can make allowances; I am a king. I would flay him alive for half of them, and make him swallow back the other half without his skin.

Wallace. Few have a right to punish, all to pardon.

Edward. I perceive thou hast at last some glimmering of shame; and adversity makes thee Christian-like.

Wallace. Adversity then, in exercising her power, loses her name and features. King Edward! thou hast raised me among men. Without thy banners and bows in array against me, I had sunk into utter forgetfulness. Thanks to thee for placing me, eternally, where no strength of mine could otherwise have borne me! Thanks to thee for bathing my spirit in deep thoughts, in refreshing calm, in sacred stillness! This, O king, is the bath for knighthood: after this it may feast, and hear bold and sweet voices, and mount to its repose.

I thought it hard to be seized and bound and betrayed, by those in whom I trusted. I grieved that a valiant soldier (such is Menteith) should act so. Unhappy! he must now avoid all men's discourses. 'Twill pierce his heart to hear censures on the disloyal; and praises on the loyal will dry up its innermost drop. Two friends can never more embrace in his presence, but he shall curse them in the bitterness of his soul, and his sword shall spring up to cleave them. 'Alas!' will he say to himself, 'is it thus? was it thus when I drew it for my country?'

Edward. Think now of other matters: think, what I suggested, of thy reproaches.

Wallace. I have none to make myself.

Edward. Be it so: I did not talk about that any longer.

Wallace. What others then can touch or reach me?

Edward. Such as Bruce's.

Wallace. Reproaches they were not: for none were ever cast against me: but taunts they were, not unmingled with invitations.

Edward. The same invitations, and much greater, I now repeat. Thou shalt govern Scotland for me.

Wallace. Scotland, sir, shall be governed for none: she is old enough to stand by herself, and to stand upright: the blows she hath received have not broken her loins.

Edward. Come, come, Wallace! thou hast sense and spirit: confess to me fairly that, if thou wert at liberty, thou wouldst gladly make Bruce regret his ill-treatment of thee.

Wallace. Well then, I do confess it.

Edward. Something would I myself hazard; not too much; but prudently and handsomely. Tell me now plainly, for I love plain-speaking and everything free and open, in what manner thou wouldst set about it; and perhaps, God willing, I may provide the means.

Wallace. Sir, you certainly would not: it little suits your temper and disposition.

Edward. Faith! not so little as thou supposest. Magnanimity and long-suffering have grown upon me, and well become me; but they have not produced all the good I might have expected from them. Joyfully as I would try them again, at any proper opportunity, there is nothing I am

not bound to do, in dearness to my people, to rid myself of an enemy.

In my mind, no expressions could be more insulting than Bruce's, when he accused thee, a low and vulgar man (how canst thou help that ?), of wishing to possess the crown.

Wallace. He was right.

Edward. How ! astonishment ! Thou wouldst then have usurped the sovranty !

Wallace. I possessed a greater power by war than peace could ever give me ; yet I invited and exhorted the legitimate heir of the throne to fight for it and receive it. If there is any satisfaction or gratification in being the envy of men, I had enough and greatly more than enough of it, when even those I love envied me : what would have been my portion of it, had I possessed that which never should have been mine !

Edward. Why then sayest thou that Bruce was right ?

Wallace. He judged, as most men do, from his own feelings. Many have worn crowns ; some have deserved them : I have done neither.

Edward. Return to Scotland ; bring me Bruce's head back ; and rule the kingdom as viceroy.

Wallace. I would rather make him rue his words against me, and hear him.

Edward. Thou shalt.

Wallace. Believe me, sir, you would repent of your permission.

Edward. No, by the saints !

Wallace. You would indeed, sir.

Edward. Go, and try me : do not hesitate : I see thou art half inclined : I may never make the same offer again.

Wallace. I will not go.

Edward. Weak wavering man! hath imprisonment in one day or two wrought such a change in thee?

Wallace. Slavery soon does it, but I am, and will ever be, unchanged.

Edward. It was not well, nor by my order, that thou wert dragged along the road, barefooted and bareheaded, while it snowed throughout all the journey.

Wallace. Certainly, sir, you did not order it to snow from the latter days of December till the middle of January; but whatever else was done, if my guard spake the truth . . .

Edward. He lied, he lied, he lied . . .

Wallace. . . . or the warrant he showed me is authentic, was done according to your royal order.

Edward. What! are my officers turned into constables? base varlets! It must have seemed hard, Wallace!

Wallace. Not that indeed; for I went barefooted in my youth, and have mostly been bareheaded when I have not been in battle. But to be thrust and shoven into the courtyard; to shiver under the pent-house from which the wind had blown the thatch, while the blazing fire within made the snow upon the opposite roof redden like the dawn; to wax faint, ahungered and athirst, when, within arm's length of me, men pushed the full cup away, and would drink no more; to that I had never been accustomed in my country. The dogs, honester and kinder folks than most, but rather dull in the love of hospitality, unless in the beginning some pains

are taken with them by their masters, tore my scant gear; and then your soldiers felt their contempt more natural and easy. The poor curs had done for them what their betters could not do; and the bolder of the company looked hard in my face, to see if I were really the same man.

Edward. O the rude rogues! that was too bad.

Wallace. The worst was this. Children and women, fathers and sons, came running down the hills, some sinking knee-deep in the incrusted snow, others tripping lightly over it, to celebrate the nativity of our blessed Lord. They intreated, and the good priest likewise, that I might be led forth into the church, and might kneel down amid them. 'Off,' cried the guard; 'would ye plead for Wallace the traitor?' I saw them tremble, for it was treason in them, and then came my grief upon me, and bore hard. They lifted up their eyes to heaven; and it gave me strength.

Edward. Thou shalt not, I swear to thee, march back in such plight.

Wallace. I will not, I swear to thee, march a traitor.

Edward. Right! right! I can trust thee . . more than half already. Bruce is the traitor; the worst of the two; he raises the country against me. Go; encompass him, entrap him, quell him.

Sweetheart! thou hast a rare fancy, a youth's love at first sight, for thy chains: unwilling to barter them for liberty, for country, for revenge, for honour.

Wallace. Honour and revenge, such as I have carried in my bosom, are very dear to me! For liberty and country I have often shed my blood,

and, if more is wanting, take it. My heart is no better than a wooden cup, whereof the homely liquor a royal hand would cast away indifferently. There once were those who pledged it! where are they? Forgive my repining, O God! Enough, if they are not here.

Edward. Nay, nay, Wallace! thou wrongest me. Thou art a brave man. I do not like to see those irons about thy wrists: they are too broad and tight: they have bruised thee cruelly.

Wallace. Methinks there was no necessity to have hammered the rivets on quite so hard: and the fellow who did it, needed not to look over his shoulder so often while he was about it, telling the people, 'This is Wallace.' Wrist or iron he and his hammer cared not.

Edward. I am mightily taken with the fancy of seeing thee mortify Bruce. Thou shalt do it: let me have thy plan.

Wallace. Sir, I have none worthy of your royal participation.

Edward. Thou formest the best possible in one moment, and executest them in another.

Wallace. Peradventure the only one I could devise and execute, in this contingency, might not please you.

Edward. It would, beyond measure, I promise thee: set about it instantly: I must enjoy it before I rest. Tell it me, tell it me.

Wallace. Must I?

Edward. Thou must: I am faint with waiting.

Wallace. I would go unto him bareheaded. I would kiss his hand.

Edward. Nothing can be better; wary, provident, deep.

Wallace. I would lead him before the altar, if my entreaty could do it . .

Edward. No, no, no! Unless in case of necessity.

Wallace. I would adjure him by the Lord of Hosts, the preserver of Scotland . .

Edward. No harm in that.

Wallace. . . to pity his country . .

Edward. Ay; it would vex him to reflect on what a state it is in at present.

Wallace. . . and to proclaim a traitor to his king and God every Scotchman who abandons or despairs of her.

Edward. What is this? why would it hurt him? I comprehend not half the stratagem. How! thy limbs swell huger, thy stature higher . . . thou scornest, thou scoffest, thou defyest me! A prisoner! a bondman! By the Holy Ghost! the hurdle shall creak under thee to-morrow.

Wallace. To-morrow!

Edward. To-morrow; I repeat it.

Wallace. So soon?

Edward. Yea, by the rood! no later.

Wallace. King Edward, I never thought to thank thee.

Edward. What audacious insurgent pride! what villainous loftiness! By all the saints of heaven! every town in England shall have a fair sight of thee, more or less; hand or foot, brisket or buttock, heart or liver.

Wallace. They should have seen me, King of England, to greater advantage, if thy sword alone had been against me.

Edward. Against a vassal's!

Wallace. Against a knight's, nor unworthy of

the dignity; one who never spake falsely nor fought unfairly.

Edward. What are knights in my presence?

Wallace. Examples, monitors, preceptors, judges; the highest of the earth; for a king who is unworthy of a spur is unworthy of a sceptre. The descendant of a knight acknowledges no superior in birth; howbeit the gainer of knighthood in the field stands above him.

Edward. Talk to me of knights! Hast thou forgotten the punishment I inflicted on a prince, convicted of treason, some sixteen years ago, in another part of my kingdom? Answer me.

Wallace. I never heard it.

Edward. Never heard of the foolish David, brother of Llewelyn the Welshman?

Wallace. You said in your kingdom, sir.

Edward. I did: I made it mine by the help of God. The madman was torn asunder by horses.

Wallace. Was this also by the help of God?

Edward. His bowels and heart were burnt before his face; he was then beheaded and quartered. Now dost thou remember?

Wallace. O king! a voice more terrible than mine will ask that question of thee.

Edward. Thou shalt follow him first, limb by limb, piece by piece, drop by drop. Righteous vengeance hath overtaken thee, audacious rebel! I now have my own, and all my own.

Wallace. Not yet, O Edward! a part lies beyond the grave.

Edward. To-morrow thy tongue, I trow, shall wag less bravely, though it have a good spear to support it. I will render thee a terror to thy

riotous gang. The raven shall take a text from thee and preach over thee, and merry Carlisle shall ring the bells after the service.

Wallace. Thou needest not send branch nor bough nor cutting to Carlisle: that city, from autumn to spring, hath beheld the tree nod in its glory, and feared lest it sweep her walls.

Edward. Sirrah! where I am, mark me, there is but one great man.

Wallace. Thou hast endeavoured to make another, and wilt almost accomplish it.

Edward. Guards! away with him. A traitor's doom awaits thee.

Wallace. Because I would not be one.

Edward. Laughter too! and lewd mockery! Carry him back to prison: cord him! pinion him! cart him!

Wallace. Thou followest me to death, less willingly.

BOCCACCIO AND PETRARCA

Boccaccio. Remaining among us, I doubt not that you would soon receive the same distinctions in your native country as others have conferred upon you: indeed in confidence I may promise it. For greatly are the Florentines ashamed, that the most elegant of their writers and the most independent of their citizens lives in exile, by the injustice he had suffered in the detriment done to his property, through the intemperate administration of their laws.

Petrarca. Let them recall me soon and honourably: then perhaps I may assist them to remove

their ignominy, which I carry about with me wherever I go, and which is pointed out by my exotic laurel.

Boccaccio. There is, and ever will be, in all countries and under all governments, an ostracism for their greatest men.

Petrarca. At present we will talk no more about it. To-morrow I pursue my journey toward Padua, where I am expected; where some few value and esteem me, honest and learned and ingenious men; although neither those Transpadane regions, nor whatever extends beyond them, have yet produced an equal to Boccaccio.

Boccaccio. Then, in the name of friendship! do not go thither: form such rather from your fellow citizens. I love my equals heartily; and shall love them the better when I see them raised up here, from our own mother earth, by you.

Petrarca. Let us continue our walk.

Boccaccio. If you have been delighted (and you say you have been), at seeing again, after so long an absence, the house and garden wherein I have placed the relaters of my stories, as reported in the *Decameron*, come a little way further up the ascent, and we will pass through the vineyard on the west of the villa. You will see presently another on the right, lying in its warm little garden close to the roadside, the scene lately of somewhat that would have looked well, as illustration, in the midst of your Latin reflections. It shows us that people the most serious and determined may act at last contrariwise to the line of conduct they have laid down.

Petrarca. Relate it to me, Messer Giovanni; for you are able to give reality the merits and charms

of fiction, just as easily as you give fiction the semblance, the stature, and the movement of reality.

Boccaccio. I must here forgo such powers, if in good truth I possess them.

Petrarca. This long green alley, defended by box and cypresses, is very pleasant. The smell of box, although not sweet, is more agreeable to me than many that are; I cannot say from what resuscitation of early and tender feeling. The cypress too seems to strengthen the nerves of the brain. Indeed, I delight in the odour of most trees and plants.

Will not that dog hurt us? he comes closer.

Boccaccio. Dog! thou hast the colours of a magpie and the tongue of one: prythee be quiet: art thou not ashamed?

Petrarca. Verily he trots off, comforting his angry belly with his plenteous tail, flattened and bestrewn under it. He looks back, going on, and puffs out his upper lip without a bark.

Boccaccio. These creatures are more accessible to temperate and just rebuke than the creatures of our species, usually angry with less reason, and from no sense, as dogs are, of duty. Look into that white arcade! Surely it was white the other day: and now I perceive it is still so: the setting sun tinges it with yellow.

Petrarca. The house has nothing of either the rustic or the magnificent about it; nothing quite regular, nothing much varied. If there is anything at all affecting, as I fear there is, in the story you are about to tell me, I could wish the edifice itself bore externally some little of the interesting, that I might hereafter turn my mind

toward it, looking out of the catastrophe, though not away from it. But I do not even find the peculiar and uncostly decoration of our Tuscan villas: the central turret, round which the kite perpetually circles, in search of pigeons or smaller prey, borne onward, like the Flemish skater, by effortless will in motionless progression. The view of Fiesole must be lovely from that window; but I fancy to myself it loses the cascade under the single high arch of the Mugnone.

Boccaccio. I think so. In this villa . . come rather further off: the inhabitants of it may hear us, if they should happen to be in the arbour, as most people are at the present hour of day . . in this villa, Messer Francesco, lives Monna Tita Monalda, who tenderly loved Amadeo degli Oricellari. She, however, was reserved and coy; and Father Pietro de' Pucci, an enemy to the family of Amadeo, told her never more to think of him; for that just before he knew her, he had thrown his arm round the neck of Nunciata Righi, his mother's maid, calling her most immodestly a sweet creature, and of a whiteness that marble would split with envy at.

Monna Tita trembled and turned pale, 'Father, is the girl really so very fair?' said she anxiously.

'Madonna,' replied the father, 'after confession she is not much amiss: white she is, with a certain tint of pink, not belonging to her, but coming over her, as through the wing of an angel pleased at the holy function: and her breath is such, the very ear smells it: poor innocent sinful soul! Hei! The wretch, Amadeo, would have endangered her salvation.'

'She must be a wicked girl to let him,' said

Monna Tita. 'A young man of good parentage and education would not dare to do such a thing, of his own accord. I will see him no more, however. But it was before he knew me: and it may not be true. I cannot think any young woman would let a young man do so, even in the last hour before Lent. Now in what month was it supposed to be?'

'Supposed to be!' cried the father indignantly: 'in June; I say in June.'

'O! that now is quite impossible: for on the second of July, forty-one days from this, and at this very hour of it, he swore to me eternal love and constancy. I will inquire of him whether it is true: I will charge him with it.'

She did. Amadeo confessed his fault, and, thinking it a venial one, would have taken and kissed her hand as he asked forgiveness.

Petrarca. Children! children! I will go into the house, and if their relatives, as I suppose, have approved of the marriage, I will endeavour to persuade the young lady that a fault like this, on the repentance of her lover, is not unpardonable. But first, is Amadeo a young man of loose habits?

Boccaccio. Less than our others: in fact, I never heard of any deviation, excepting this.

Petrarca. Come then with me.

Boccaccio. Wait a little.

Petrarca. I hope the modest Tita, after a trial, will not be too severe with him.

Boccaccio. Severity is far from her nature; but, such is her purity and innocence, she shed many and bitter tears at his confession, and declared her unalterable determination of taking the veil among the nuns of Fiesole. Amadeo fell at her

feet, and wept upon them. She pushed him from her gently, and told him she would still love him, if he would follow her example, leave the world, and become a friar of San Marco. Amadeo was speechless; and, if he had not been so, he never would have made a promise he intended to violate. She retired from him: after a time he arose, less wounded than benumbed by the sharp uncovered stones in the garden walk: and, as a man who fears to fall from a precipice goes farther from it than is necessary, so did Amadeo shun the quarter where the gate is, and, oppressed by his agony and despair, throw his arms across the sun-dial and rest his brow upon it, hot as it must have been on a cloudless day in August. When the evening was about to close, he was aroused by the cries of rooks overhead: they flew toward Florence, and beyond: he too went back into the city.

Tita fell sick from her inquietude. Every morning ere sunrise did Amadeo return, but could hear only from the labourers in the field that Monna Tita was ill, because she had promised to take the veil and had not taken it, knowing, as she must do, that the heavenly bridegroom is a bridegroom never to be trifled with, let the spouse be young and beautiful as she may be. Amadeo had often conversed with the peasant of the farm, who much pitied so worthy and loving a gentleman, and finding him one evening fixing some thick and high stakes in the ground, offered to help him. After due thanks, 'It is time,' said the peasant, 'to rebuild the hovel and watch the grapes.'

He went into the stable, collected the old pillars of his autumnal observatory, drove them into the ground, and threw the matting over them.

'This is my house,' cried he. 'Could I never, in my stupidity, think about rebuilding it before? Bring me another mat or two: I will sleep here to-night, to-morrow night, every night, all autumn, all winter.'

He slept there, and was consoled at last by hearing that Monna Tita was out of danger, and recovering from her illness by spiritual means. His heart grew lighter day after day. Every evening did he observe the rooks, in the same order, pass along the same track in the heavens, just over San Marco: and it now occurred to him, after three weeks indeed, that Monna Tita had perhaps some strange idea, in choosing his monastery, not unconnected with the passage of these birds. He grew calmer upon it, until he asked himself whether he might hope. In the midst of this half-meditation, half-dream, his whole frame was shaken by the voices, however low and gentle, of two monks, coming from the villa and approaching him. He would have concealed himself under this bank whereon we are standing; but they saw him and called him by name. He now perceived that the younger of them was Guiberto Oddi, with whom he had been at school about six or seven years ago, and who admired him for his courage and frankness when he was almost a child.

'Do not let us mortify poor Amadeo,' said Guiberto to his companion. 'Return to the road: I will speak a few words to him, and engage him (I trust) to comply with reason and yield to necessity.' The elder monk, who saw he should have to climb the hill again, assented to the proposal, and went into the road. After the first

embraces and few words, 'Amadeo! Amadeo!' said Guiberto, 'it was love that made me a friar; let anything else make you one.'

'Kind heart!' replied Amadeo. 'If death or religion, or hatred of me, deprives me of Tita Monalda, I will die, where she commanded me, in the cowl. It is you who prepare her then to throw away her life and mine!'

'Hold! Amadeo!' said Guiberto, 'I officiate together with good Father Fontesecco, who invariably falls asleep amid our holy function.'

Now, Messer Francesco, I must inform you that Father Fontesecco has the heart of a flower. It feels nothing, it wants nothing; it is pure and simple, and full of its own little light. Innocent as a child, as an angel, nothing ever troubled him, but how to devise what he should confess. A confession costs him more trouble to invent than any Giornata in my *Decameron* cost me. He was once overheard to say on this occasion, 'God forgive me in his infinite mercy, for making it appear that I am a little worse than he has chosen I should be!' He is temperate; for he never drinks more than exactly half the wine and water set before him. In fact, he drinks the wine and leaves the water, saying, 'We have the same water up at San Domenico: we send it hither: it would be uncivil to take back our own gift, and still more to leave a suspicion that we thought other people's wine poor beverage.' Being afflicted by the gravel, the physician of his convent advised him, as he never was fond of wine, to leave it off entirely: on which he said, 'I know few things; but this I know well: in water there is often gravel, in wine never. It hath pleased God to

afflict me, and even to go a little out of his way in order to do it, for the greater warning to other sinners. I will drink wine, brother Anselmini, and help his work.'

I have led you away from the younger monk.

'While Father Fontesecco is in the first stage of beatitude, chanting through his nose the benedicite, I will attempt,' said Guiberto, 'to comfort Monna Tita.'

'Good blessed Guiberto!' exclaimed Amadeo in a transport of gratitude, at which Guiberto smiled with his usual grace and suavity. 'O Guiberto! Guiberto! my heart is breaking. Why should she want you to comfort her . . but . . comfort her then!' and he covered his face within his hands.

'Remember,' said Guiberto placidly, 'her uncle is bedridden: her aunt never leaves him: the servants are old and sullen, and will stir for nobody. Finding her resolved, as they believe, to become a nun, they are little assiduous in their services. Humour her, if none else does, Amadeo; let her fancy that you intend to be a friar; and, for the present, walk not on these grounds.'

'Are you true, or are you traitorous?' cried Amadeo, grasping his friend's hand most fiercely.

'Follow your own counsel, if you think mine insincere,' said the young friar, not withdrawing his hand, but placing the other on Amadeo's. 'Let me, however, advise you to conceal yourself; and I will direct Silvestrina to bring you such accounts of her mistress as may at least make you easy in regard to her health. Adieu.'

Amadeo was now rather tranquil; more than he had ever been, not only since the displeasure of

Monna Tita, but since the first sight of her. Profuse at all times in his gratitude to Silvestrina, whenever she brought him good news, news better than usual, he pressed her to his bosom. Silvestrina Pioppi is about fifteen; slender, fresh, intelligent, lively, good-humoured, sensitive; and any one but Amadeo might call her very pretty.

Petrarca. Ah Giovanni! here I find your heart obtaining the mastery over your vivid and volatile imagination. Well have you said, the maiden being really pretty, any one but Amadeo might think her so. On the banks of the Sorga there are beautiful maids: the woods and the rocks have a thousand times repeated it: I heard but one echo: I heard but one name: I would have fled from them for ever at another.

Boccaccio. Francesco, do not beat your breast just now: wait a little. Monna Tita would take the veil. The fatal certainty was announced to Amadeo by his true Guiberto, who had earnestly and repeatedly prayed her to consider the thing a few months longer.

'I will see her first! By all the saints of heaven I will see her!' cried the desperate Amadeo, and ran into the house, toward the still apartment of his beloved. Fortunately Guiberto was neither less active nor less strong than he, and overtaking him at the moment, drew him into the room opposite. 'If you will be quiet and reasonable, there is yet a possibility left you,' said Guiberto in his ear, although perhaps he did not think it. 'But if you utter a voice or are seen by any one, you ruin the fame of her you love, and obstruct your own prospects for ever. It being known that you have not slept in Florence these several nights,

it will be suspected by the malicious that you have slept in the villa with the connivance of Monna Tita. Compose yourself: answer nothing: rest where you are: do not add a worse imprudence to a very bad one: I promise you my assistance, my speedy return and best counsel: you shall be released at daybreak.' He ordered Silvestrina to supply the unfortunate youth with the cordials usually administered to the uncle, or with the rich old wine they were made of; and she performed the order with such promptitude and attention that he was soon in some sort refreshed.

Petrarca. I pity him from my soul, poor young man! Alas, we are none of us, by original sin, free from infirmities or from vices.

Boccaccio. If we could find a man exempt by nature from vices and infirmities, we should find one not worth knowing: he would also be void of tenderness and compassion. What allowances then could his best friends expect from him in their frailties? What help, consolation, and assistance, in their misfortunes? We are in the midst of a workshop well stored with sharp instruments: we may do ill with many, unless we take heed; and good with all, if we will but learn how to employ them.

Petrarca. There is somewhat of reason in this. You strengthen me to proceed with you: I can bear the rest.

Boccaccio. Guiberto had taken leave of his friend, and had advanced a quarter of a mile, which (as you perceive) is nearly the whole way, on his return to the monastery, when he was overtaken by some peasants, who were hastening homeward from Florence. The information he collected

from them made him determine to retrace his steps. He entered the room again, and, from the intelligence he had just acquired, gave Amadeo the assurance that Monna Tita must delay her entrance into the convent; for that the abbess had that moment gone down the hill on her way toward Siena, to venerate some holy relics, carrying with her three candles, each five feet long, to burn before them; which candles contained many particles of the myrrh presented at the nativity of our Saviour by the wise men of the East. Amadeo breathed freely, and was persuaded by Guiberto to take another cup of old wine, and to eat with him some cold roast kid, which had been offered him for *merenda*.[1] After the agitation of his mind a heavy sleep fell upon the lover, coming almost before Guiberto departed; so heavy indeed that Silvestrina was alarmed. It was her apartment; and she performed the honours of it as well as any lady in Florence could have done.

Petrarca. I easily believe it: the poor are more attentive than the rich, and the young are more compassionate than the old.

Boccaccio. Oh Francesco! what inconsistent creatures are we!

Petrarca. True, indeed! I now foresee the end. He might have done worse.

Boccaccio. I think so.

Petrarca. He almost deserved it.

Boccaccio. I think that too.

Petrarca. Wretched mortals! our passions for ever lead us into this, or worse.

[1] *Merenda* is luncheon, *meridiana*, eaten by the wealthier at the hour when the peasants dine.

Boccaccio. Ay, truly; much worse generally.

Petrarca. The very twig on which the flowers grew lately, scourges us to the bone in its maturity.

Boccaccio. Incredible will it be to you, and, by my faith! to me it was hardly credible. Certain, however, is it, that Guiberto on his return by sunrise found Amadeo in the arms of sleep.

Petrarca. Not at all, not at all incredible: the truest lover would have done the same, exhausted by suffering.

Boccaccio. He was truly in the arms of sleep; but, Francesco, there was another pair of arms about him, worth twenty such, divinity as he is. A loud burst of laughter from Guiberto did not arouse either of the parties: but Monna Tita heard it, and rushed into the room, tearing her hair, and invoking the saints of heaven against the perfidy of man. She seized Silvestrina by that arm which appeared the most offending: the girl opened her eyes, turned on her face, rolled out of bed, and threw herself at the feet of her mistress, shedding tears, and wiping them away with the only piece of linen about her. Monna Tita too shed tears. Amadeo still slept profoundly; a flush, almost of crimson, overspreading his cheeks. Monna Tita led away, after some pause, poor Silvestrina, and made her confess the whole. She then wept more and more, and made the girl confess it again, and explain her confession. 'I cannot believe such wickedness,' she cried: 'he could not be so hardened. O sinful Silvestrina! how will you ever tell Father Doni one half! one quarter! He never can absolve you.'

Petrarca. Giovanni! I am glad I did not enter the house; you were prudent in restraining me.

I have no pity for the youth at all : never did one so deserve to lose a mistress.

Boccaccio. Say, rather, to gain a wife.

Petrarca. Absurdity ! impossibility !

Boccaccio. He won her fairly ; strangely, and on a strange table, as he played his game. Listen ! that guitar is Monna Tita's. Listen ! what a fine voice (do not you think it ?) is Amadeo's !

Amadeo (*singing*).

Oh ! I have err'd !
I laid my hand upon the nest
(Tita, I sigh to sing the rest)
Of the wrong bird.

Petrarca. She laughs too at it ? Ah ! Monna Tita was made by nature to live on this side of Fiesole.

JOHN OF GAUNT AND JOANNA OF KENT

Joanna. How is this, my cousin, that you are besieged in your own house, by the citizens of London ? I thought you were their idol.

Gaunt. If their idol, madam, I am one which they may tread on as they list when down ; but which, by my soul and knighthood ! the ten best battle-axes among them shall find it hard work to unshrine.

Pardon me . . I have no right perhaps to take or touch this hand . . yet, my sister, bricks and stones and arrows are not presents fit for you : let me conduct you some paces hence.

Joanna. I will speak to those below in the street : quit my hand : they shall obey me.

Gaunt. If you intend to order my death, madam, your guards who have entered my court, and whose spurs and halberts I hear upon the staircase, may overpower my domestics; and, seeing no such escape as becomes my dignity, I submit to you. Behold my sword at your feet! Some formalities, I trust, will be used in the proceedings against me. Entitle me, in my attainder, not John of Gaunt, not Duke of Lancaster, not King of Castile; nor commemorate my father, the most glorious of princes, the vanquisher and pardoner of the most powerful; nor style me, what those who loved or who flattered me did when I was happier, cousin to the Fair Maid of Kent. Joanna! those days are over! But no enemy, no law, no eternity can take away from me, or move further off, my affinity in blood to the conqueror in the field of Cressy, of Poictiers, and Najora. Edward was my brother when he was but your cousin; and the edge of my shield has clinked on his in many a battle. Yes, we were ever near, if not in worth, in danger.

Joanna. Attainder! God avert it! Duke of Lancaster, what dark thought . . . Alas! that the Regency should have known it! I came hither, sir, for no such purpose as to ensnare or incriminate or alarm you.

These weeds might surely have protected me from the fresh tears you have drawn forth.

Gaunt. Sister, be comforted! this visor too has felt them.

Joanna. O my Edward! my own so lately! Thy memory . . thy beloved image . . which never hath abandoned me . . makes me bold; I dare not say generous; for in saying it I should cease

to be so . . and who could be called generous by the side of thee ! I will rescue from perdition the enemy of my son.

Cousin, you loved your brother : love then what was dearer to him than his life : protect what he, valiant as you have seen him, cannot ! The father, who foiled so many, hath left no enemies : the innocent child, who can injure no one, finds them !

Why have you unlaced and laid aside your visor ? Do not expose your body to those missiles. Hold your shield before yourself, and step aside. I need it not. I am resolved . .

Gaunt. On what, my cousin ? Speak, and by the Lord ! it shall be done. This breast is your shield ; this arm is mine.

Joanna. Heavens ! who could have hurled those masses of stone from below ! they stunned me. Did they descend all of them together ? or did they split into fragments on hitting the pavement ?

Gaunt. Truly I was not looking that way : they came, I must believe, while you were speaking.

Joanna. Aside ! aside ! further back ! disregard *me* ! Look ! that last arrow sticks half its head deep in the wainscot. It shook so violently, I did not see the feather at first.

No, no, Lancaster ! I will not permit it. Take your shield up again ; and keep it all before you. Now step aside . . I am resolved to prove whether the people will hear me.

Gaunt. Then, madam, by your leave . . .

Joanna. Hold ! forbear ! Come hither ! hither . . not forward.

Gaunt. Villains ! take back to your kitchens those spits and skewers that you forsooth would

fain call swords and arrows ; and keep your bricks and stones for your graves !

Joanna. Imprudent man ! who can save you ? I shall be frightened : I must speak at once.

O good kind people ! ye who so greatly loved me, when I am sure I had done nothing to deserve it, have I (unhappy me !) no merit with you now, when I would assuage your anger, protect your fair fame, and send you home contented with yourselves and me ! Who is he, worthy citizens, whom ye would drag to slaughter ?

True indeed he did revile some one ; neither I nor you can say whom ; some feaster and rioter, it seems, who had little right (he thought) to carry sword or bow, and who, to show it, hath slunk away. And then another raised his anger ; he was indignant that, under his roof, a woman should be exposed to stoning. Which of you would not be as choleric in a like affront ? In the house of which among you, should I not be protected as resolutely?

No, no : I never can believe those angry cries. Let none ever tell me again he is the enemy of my son, of his king, your darling child Richard. Are your fears more lively than a poor weak female's ? than a mother's ? yours, whom he hath so often led to victory, and praised to his father, naming each . . He, John of Gaunt, the defender of the helpless, the comforter of the desolate, the rallying signal of the desperately brave !

Retire, Duke of Lancaster ! This is no time . .

Gaunt. Madam, I obey : but not through terror of that puddle at the house-door, which my handful of dust would dry up. Deign to command me !

Joanna. In the name of my son then, retire !

Gaunt. Angelic goodness ! I must fairly win it.

Joanna. I think I know his voice that crieth out, 'Who will answer for him?' An honest and loyal man's, one who would counsel and save me in any difficulty and danger. With what pleasure and satisfaction, with what perfect joy and confidence, do I answer our right-trusty and well-judging friend!

'Let Lancaster bring his sureties,' say you, 'and we separate.' A moment yet before we separate; if I might delay you so long, to receive your sanction of those sureties; for in such grave matters it would ill become us to be over-hasty. I could bring fifty, I could bring a hundred, not from among soldiers, not from among courtiers, but selected from yourselves, were it equitable and fair to show such partialities, or decorous in the parent and guardian of a king to offer any other than herself.

Raised by the hand of the Almighty from amidst you, but still one of you, if the mother of a family is a part of it, here I stand, surety for John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, for his loyalty and allegiance.

Gaunt (*running toward Joanna*). Are the rioters then bursting into the chamber through the windows?

Joanna. The windows and doors of this solid edifice rattled and shook at the people's acclamation. My word is given for you: this was theirs in return. Lancaster! what a voice have the people when they speak out! It shakes me with astonishment, almost with consternation, while it establishes the throne: what must it be when it is lifted up in vengeance!

Gaunt. Wind; vapour . .

Joanna. . . Which none can wield nor hold. Need I say this to my cousin of Lancaster ?

Gaunt. Rather say, madam, that there is always one star above which can tranquillise and control them.

Joanna. Go, cousin ! another time more sincerity !

Gaunt. You have this day saved my life from the people : for I now see my danger better, when it is no longer close before me. My Christ ! if ever I forget . .

Joanna. Swear not : every man in England hath sworn what you would swear. But if you abandon my Richard, my brave and beautiful child, may . . Oh ! I could never curse, nor wish an evil : but, if you desert him in the hour of need, you will think of those who have not deserted you, and your own great heart will lie heavy on you, Lancaster !

Am I graver than I ought to be, that you look dejected ? Come then, gentle cousin, lead me to my horse, and accompany me home. Richard will embrace us tenderly. Every one is dear to every other upon rising out fresh from peril : affectionately then will he look, sweet boy, upon his mother and his uncle ! Never mind how many questions he may ask you, nor how strange ones. His only displeasure, if he has any, will be, that he stood not against the rioters ; or among them.

Gaunt. Older than he have been as fond of mischief, and as fickle in the choice of a party.

I shall tell him that, coming to blows, the assailant is often in the right ; that the assailed is always.

KING HENRY IV AND SIR ARNOLD SAVAGE

Savage. I obey the commands of my liege.

Henry. 'Tis well; thou appearest more civil and courteous, Sir Arnold Savage, than this morning in another place, when thou declaredst unto me, as Speaker of the Commons, that no subsidy should be granted me until every cause of public grievance were removed.

Savage. I am now in the house of the greatest man upon earth; I was then in the house of the greatest nation.

Henry. Marry! thou speakest rightly upon both points; but the latter, I swear unto thee, pleaseth me most. And now, Savage, I do tell thee with like frankness, I had well-nigh sent a score of halberts among your worshipful knights and sleek wool-staplers, for I was sore chafed; and, if another had dealt with me in such wise, I should have straightway followed my inclination. Thou knowest I am grievously let and hindered in my projected war, by such obstinacy and undutifulness in my people. I raised up the House of Commons four years ago, and placed it in opposition to my barons, with trust and confidence that, by the blessing of Christ and his saints, I might be less hampered in my complete conquest of France. This is monstrous: Parliament speaks too plainly and steps too stoutly for a creature of four years' growth.

Savage. God forbid that any king of England should achieve the conquest of all France. Patience,

my liege and lord! Our Norman ancestors, the most warlike people on whose banners the morning sun ever lighted, have wrested the sceptre from her swaddling kings, and, pushing them back on their cushions and cupboards, have been contented with the seizure of their best and largest province. The possession of more serfs would have tempted them to sit down in idleness, and no piece of unbroken turf would have been left for the playground of their children in arms. William the Conqueror, the most puissant of knights and the wisest of statesmen, thought fit to set open a new career, lest the pride of hi chivalry should be troublesome to him at home. He led them forth against the brave and good Harold, whose armies had bled profusely in their war against the Scot. Pity that such blood as the Saxon should ever have been spilt! but hence are the title-deeds to our lands and tenements, the perpetuity of our power and dominion.

Henry. To preserve them from jeopardy, I must have silver in store; I must have horses and armour, and wherewith to satisfy the cravings of the soldier, always sharp, and sharpest of all after fighting.

Savage. My liege must also have other things, which escaped his recollection.

Henry. Store of hides, and of the creatures that were within them; store of bacon; store of oats and barley, of rye and good wheaten corn; hemp, shipping, masts, anchors; pine-tree and its pitch from the Norwegian, yew-tree from Corse and Dalmat. Divers other commodities must be procured from the ruler of the Adriatic, from him who never was infant nor stripling, whom God

took by the right hand and taught to walk by himself the first hour. Moreover, I must have instruments of mine own device, weighty, and exceeding costly; such as machinery for beating down walls. Nothing of these have escaped my knowledge or memory, but the recital of some befits a butler or sutler or armourer, better than a king.

Savage. And yet methinks, sir, there are others which you might have mentioned and have not, the recital of which would befit a king, rather than sutler, butler, or armourer: they are indeed the best and most necessary things in the world to batter down your enemy's walls with.

Henry. What may they be? you must find them.

Savage. Sir, you have found them, and must keep them: they are the hearts of your subjects. Your horse will not gallop far without them, though you empty into his manger all the garners of Surrey. Wars are requisite, to diminish the power of your Barons, by keeping them long and widely separate from the main body of retainers, and under the ken of a stern and steady prince, watching their movements, curbing their discourses, and inuring them to regular and sharp discipline. In general they are the worthless exalted by the weak, and dangerous from wealth ill acquired and worse expended. The whole people is a good king's household; quiet and orderly when well treated, and ever in readiness to defend him against the malice of the disappointed, the perfidy of the ungrateful, and the usurpation of the familiar. Act in such guise, most glorious Henry, that the king may say *my* people, and the people may say *our* king: I then will promise you more, passing any computation,

than I refused you this morning; the enjoyment of a blessing, to which the conquest of France in comparison is as a broken flagstaff . . . self-approbation in government and security in power. A Norman by descent, and an Englishman by birth and inheritance, the humiliation of France is requisite to my sense even of quiet enjoyment. Nevertheless I cannot delude my understanding, on which is impressed this truth, namely, that the condition of a people which hath made many conquests, doth ultimately become worse than that of the conquered. For, the conquered have no longer to endure the sufferings of weakness or the struggles of strength; and some advantages are usually holden forth to keep them peaceable and contented: but under a conquering prince the people are shadows, which lessen and lessen as he mounts in glory, until at last they become, if I may reasonably say it and unreprovedly, a thing of nothing, a shapeless form.

It is my office and my duty to provide that this evil, in the present day, do not befall us; and that our late descendants, with the same incitements to bravery, the same materials and means of greatness, may deserve as well of your family, my liege, as we have deserved of you.

Henry. Faith! I could find it in my heart, Sir Arnold, to clip thine eagle's claws and perch thee somewhere in the peerage.

Savage. Measureless is the distance between my liege and me; but I occupy the second rank among men now living, forasmuch as, under the guidance of Almighty God, the most discreet and courageous have appointed me, unworthy as I am, to be the great comprehensive symbol of the English people.

THE MAID OF ORLEANS AND AGNES SOREL

Agnes. If a boy could ever be found so beautiful and so bashful, I should have taken you for a boy about fifteen years old. Really, and without flattery, I think you very lovely.

Jeanne. I hope I shall be greatly more so.

Agnes. Nay, nay: do not expect to improve, except a little in manner. Manner is the fruit, blushes are the blossom: these must fall off before the fruit sets.

Jeanne. By God's help, I may be soon more comely in the eyes of men.

Agnes. Ha! ha! even in piety there is a spice of vanity. The woman can only cease to be the woman when angels have disrobed her in Paradise.

Jeanne. I shall be far from loveliness, even in my own eyes, until I execute the will of God in the deliverance of his people.

Agnes. Never hope it.

Jeanne. The deliverance that is never hoped seldom comes. We conquer by hope and trust.

Agnes. Be content to have humbled the proud islanders. O how I rejoice that a mere child has done so.

Jeanne. A child of my age, or younger, chastised the Philistines, and smote down the giant their leader.

Agnes. But Talbot is a giant of another mould: his will is immovable, his power is irresistible, his word of command is *Conquer*.

Jeanne. It shall be heard no longer. The tempest of battle drowns it in English blood.

Agnes. Poor simpleton! The English will recover from the stupor of their fright, believing thee no longer to be a sorceress. Did ever sword or spear intimidate them? Hast thou never heard of Creci? hast thou never heard of Agincourt? hast thou never heard of Poictiers? where the chivalry of France was utterly vanquished by sick and starving men, one against five. The French are the eagle's plume, the English are his talon.

Jeanne. The talon and the plume shall change places.

Agnes. Too confident!

Jeanne. O lady! is any one too confident in God?

Agnes. We may mistake his guidance. Already not only the whole host of the English, but many of our wisest and most authoritative churchmen, believe you on their consciences to act under the instigation of Satan.

Jeanne. What country or what creature has the Evil One ever saved? With what has he tempted me? with reproaches, with scorn, with weary days, with slumberless nights, with doubts, distrusts, and dangers, with absence from all who cherish me, with immodest soldierly language, and perhaps an untimely and a cruel death.

Agnes. But you are not afraid.

Jeanne. Healthy and strong, yet always too timorous, a few seasons ago I fled away from the lowings of a young steer, if he ran opposite; I awaited not the butting of a full-grown kid; the barking of a house-dog at our neighbour's gate turned me pale as ashes. And (shame upon me!)

I scarcely dared kiss the child, when he called on me with burning tongue in the pestilence of a fever.

Agnes. No wonder! A creature in a fever! what a frightful thing!

Jeanne. It would be, were it not so piteous.

Agnes. And did you kiss it? Did you really kiss the lips?

Jeanne. I fancied mine would refresh them a little.

Agnes. And did they? I should have thought mine could do but trifling good in such cases.

Jeanne. Alas! when I believed I had quite cooled them, it was death had done it.

Agnes. Ah! this is courage.

Jeanne. The courage of the weaker sex, inherent in us all, but as deficient in me as in any, until an infant taught me my duty by its cries. Yet never have I quailed in the front of the fight, where I directed our ranks against the bravest. God pardon me if I err! but I believe his Spirit flamed within my breast, strengthened my arm, and led me on to victory.

Agnes. Say not so, or they will burn thee alive, poor child!

Why fallest thou before me? I have some power indeed, but in this extremity I could little help thee. The priest never releases the victim.

What! how! thy countenance is radiant with a heavenly joy: thy humility is like an angel's at the feet of God: I am unworthy to behold it.

Rise, Jeanne, rise!

Jeanne. Martyrdom too! The reward were too great for such an easy and glad obedience. France will become just and righteous: France will praise the Lord for her deliverance.

Agnes. Sweet enthusiast! I am confident, I am certain, of thy innocence.

Jeanne. O Lady Agnes!

Agnes. Why fixest thou thy eyes on me so piteously? Why sobbest thou? thou, to whom the representation of an imminent death to be apprehended for thee, left untroubled, joyous, exulting. Speak; tell me.

Jeanne. I must. This also is commanded me. You believe me innocent?

Agnes. In truth I do: why then look abashed? Alas! alas! could I mistake the reason? I spoke of innocence!

Leave me, leave me. Return another time. Follow thy vocation.

Jeanne. Agnes Sorel! be thou more than innocent, if innocence is denied thee. In the name of the Almighty, I call on thee to earn his mercy.

Agnes. I implore it incessantly, by day, by night.

Jeanne. Serve him as thou mayest best serve him; and thy tears, I promise thee, shall soon be less bitter than those which are dropping on this jewelled hand, and on the rude one which has dared to press it.

Agnes. What can I, what can I do?

Jeanne. Lead the king back to his kingdom.

Agnes. The king is in France.

Jeanne. No, no, no.

Agnes. Upon my word of honour.

Jeanne. And at such a time, O Heaven! in idleness and sloth!

Agnes. Indeed no. He is busy (this is the hour) in feeding and instructing two young hawks. Could you but see the little miscreants, how they

dare to bite and claw and tug at him. He never hurts or scolds them for it; he is so good-natured: he even lets them draw blood; he is so very brave!

Running away from France! Who could have raised such a report? Indeed he is here. He never thought of leaving the country: and his affairs are becoming more and more prosperous ever since the battle. Can you not take my asseveration? Must I say it? he is now in this very house.

Jeanne. Then not in France. In France all love their country. Others of our kings, old men tell us, have been captives; but less ignominiously. Their enemies have respected their misfortunes and their honour.

Agnes. The English have always been merciful and generous.

Jeanne. And will you be less generous, less merciful?

Agnes. I?

Jeanne. You; the beloved of Charles.

Agnes. This is too confident. No, no: do not draw back: it is not too confident: it is only too reproachful. But your actions have given you authority. I have, nevertheless, a right to demand of you what creature on earth I have ever treated ignominiously or unkindly.

Jeanne. Your beloved; your king.

Agnes. Never. I owe to him all I have, all I am.

Jeanne. Too true! But let him in return owe to you, O Lady Agnes, eternal happiness, eternal glory. Condescend to labour with the humble handmaiden of the Lord, in fixing his throne and delivering his people.

Agnes. I cannot fight: I abominate war.

Jeanne. Not more than I do; but men love it.

Agnes. Too much.

Jeanne. Often too much, for often unjustly. But when God's right hand is visible in the vanguard, we who are called must follow.

Agnes. I dare not; indeed I dare not.

Jeanne. You dare not? you who dare withhold the king from his duty!

Agnes. We must never talk of their duties to our princes.

Jeanne. Then we omit to do much of our own. It is now mine: but above all it is yours.

Agnes. There are learned and religious men who might more properly.

Jeanne. Are these learned and religious men in the court? Pray tell me: since, if they are, seeing how poorly they have sped, I may peradventure, however unwillingly, however blameably, abate a little of my reverence for learning, and look for pure religion in lower places.

Agnes. They are modest; and they usually ask of me in what manner they may best please their master.

Jeanne. They believe then that your affection is proportional to the power you possess over him. I have heard complaints that it is usually quite the contrary. But can such great men be loved? And do you love him? Why do you sigh so?

Agnes. Life is but sighs, and when they cease, 'tis over.

Jeanne. Now deign to answer me: do you truly love him?

Agnes. From my soul; and above it.

Jeanne. Then save him.

Lady! I am grieved at your sorrow, although

it will hereafter be a source of joy unto you. The purest water runs from the hardest rock. Neither worth nor wisdom come without an effort; and patience and piety and salutary knowledge spring up and ripen from under the harrow of affliction. Before there is wine or there is oil, the grape must be trodden and the olive must be pressed.

I see you are framing in your heart the resolution.

Agnes. My heart can admit nothing but his image.

Jeanne. It must fall thence at last.

Agnes. Alas! alas! Time loosens man's affections. I may become unworthy. In the sweetest flower there is much that is not fragrance, and which transpires when the freshness has passed away.

Alas! if he should ever cease to love me!

Jeanne. Alas! if God should!

Agnes. Then indeed he might afflict me with so grievous a calamity.

Jeanne. And none worse after?

Agnes. What can there be?

O Heaven! mercy! mercy!

Jeanne. Resolve to earn it: one hour suffices.

Agnes. I am lost. Leave me, leave me.

Jeanne. Do we leave the lost? Are they beyond our care? Remember who died for them, and them only.

Agnes. You subdue me. Spare me: I would only collect my thoughts.

Jeanne. Cast them away. Fresh herbage springs from under the withered. Be strong, and, if you love, be generous. Is it more glorious to make a captive than to redeem one?

Agnes. Is he in danger! O! . . you see all things . . is he? is he? is he?

Jeanne. From none but you.

Agnes. God, it is evident, has given to thee alone the power of rescuing both him and France. He has bestowed on thee the mightiness of virtue.

Jeanne. Believe, and prove thy belief, that he has left no little of it still in thee.

Agnes. When we have lost our chastity, we have lost all, in his sight and in man's. But man is unforgiving, God is merciful.

Jeanne. I am so ignorant, I know only a part of my duties: yet those which my Maker has taught me I am earnest to perform. He teaches me that divine love has less influence over the heart than human: he teaches me that it ought to have more: finally, he commands me to announce to thee, not his anger, but his will.

Agnes. Declare it; O declare it. I do believe his holy word is deposited in thy bosom.

Jeanne. Encourage the king to lead his vassals to the field.

Agnes. When the season is milder.

Jeanne. And bid him leave you for ever.

Agnes. Leave me! one whole campaign! one entire summer! Oh anguish! It sounded in my ears as if you said 'for ever'.

Jeanne. I say it again.

Agnes. Thy power is superhuman, mine is not.

Jeanne. It ought to be, in setting God at defiance. The mightiest of the angels rued it.

Agnes. We did not make our hearts.

Jeanne. But we can mend them.

Agnes. Oh! mine (God knows it) bleeds.

Jeanne. Say rather it expels from it the last

stagnant drop of its rebellious sin. Salutary pangs may be painfuller than mortal ones.

Agnes. Bid him leave me! wish it! permit it! think it near! believe it ever can be! Go, go . . I am lost eternally.

Jeanne. And Charles too.

Agnes. Hush! hush! What has he done that other men have not done also?

Jeanne. He has left undone what others do. Other men fight for their country.

I always thought it was pleasant to the young and beautiful to see those they love victorious and applauded. Twice in my lifetime I have been present at wakes, where prizes were contended for: what prizes I quite forget: certainly not kingdoms. The winner was made happy: but there was one made happier. Village maids love truly: ay, they love glory too; and not their own. The tenderest heart loves best the courageous one: the gentle voice says, 'Why wert thou so hazardous?' the deeper-toned replies, 'For thee, for thee.'

Agnes. But if the saints of heaven are offended, as I fear they may be, it would be presumptuous in the king to expose his person in battle, until we have supplicated and appeased them.

Jeanne. One hour of self-denial, one hour of stern exertion against the assaults of passion, outvalues a life of prayer.

Agnes. Prayer, if many others will pray with us, can do all things. I will venture to raise up that arm which has only one place for its repose: I will steal away from that undivided pillow, fragrant with fresh and unextinguishable love.

Jeanne. Sad earthly thoughts!

Agnes. You make them sad, you cannot make

them earthly. There is a divinity in a love descending from on high, in theirs who can see into the heart and mould it to their will.

Jeanne. Has man that power ?

Agnes. Happy, happy girl ! to ask it, and unfeignedly.

Jeanne. Be happy too.

Agnes. How ? how ?

Jeanne. By passing resolutely through unhappiness. It must be done.

Agnes. I will throw myself on the pavement, and pray until no star is in the heavens. Oh ! I will so pray, so weep.

Jeanne. Unless you save the tears of others, in vain you shed your own.

Agnes. Again I ask you, what *can* I do ?

Jeanne. When God has told you what you ought to do, he has already told you what you can.

Agnes. I will think about it seriously.

Jeanne. Serious thoughts are folded up, chested, and unlooked-at : lighter, like dust, settle all about the chamber. The promise to think seriously dismisses and closes the door on the thought. Adieu ! God pity and pardon you. Through you the wrath of Heaven will fall upon the kingdom.

Agnes. Denouncer of just vengeance, recall the sentence ! I tremble before that countenance severely radiant : I sink amid that calm, more appalling than the tempest. Look not into my heart with those gentle eyes ! O how they penetrate ! They ought to see no sin : sadly must it pain them.

Jeanne. Think not of me : pursue thy destination : save France.

Agnes (*after a long pause*). Glorious privilege !

divine appointment! Is it thus, O my Redeemer! my crimes are visited?

Come with me, blessed Jeanne! come instantly with me to the king: come to him whom thy virtue and valour have rescued.

Jeanne. Not now; nor ever with thee. Again I shall behold him; a conqueror at Orleans, a king at Rheims. Regenerate Agnes! be this thy glory, it there be any that is not God's.

FRA FILIPPO LIPPI AND POPE EUGENIUS THE FOURTH

Eugenius. Filippo! I am informed by my son Cosimo de' Medici of many things relating to thy life and actions, and among the rest, of thy throwing off the habit of a friar. Speak to me as to a friend. Was that well done?

Filippo. Holy Father! it was done most unadvisedly.

Eugenius. Continue to treat me with the same confidence and ingenuousness; and, beside the remuneration I intend to bestow on thee for the paintings wherewith thou hast adorned my palace, I will remove with my own hand the heavy accumulation of thy sins, and ward off the peril of fresh ones, placing within thy reach every worldly solace and contentment.

Filippo. Infinite thanks, Holy Father! from the innermost heart of your unworthy servant, whose duty and wishes bind him alike and equally to a strict compliance with your paternal commands.

Eugenius. Was it a love of the world and its vanities that induced thee to throw aside the frock?

Filippo. It was indeed, Holy Father! I never had the courage to mention it in confession among my manifold offences.

Eugenius. Bad! bad! Repentance is of little use to the sinner, unless he pour it from a full and overflowing heart into the capacious ear of the confessor. Ye must not go straightforward and bluntly up to your Maker, startling him with the horrors of your guilty conscience. Order, decency, time, place, opportunity, must be observed.

Filippo. I have observed the greater part of them: time, place, and opportunity.

Eugenius. That is much. In consideration of it, I hereby absolve thee.

Filippo. I feel quite easy, quite new-born.

Eugenius. I am desirous of hearing what sort of feelings thou experiencest, when thou givest loose to thy intractable and unruly wishes. Now, this love of the world, what can it mean? A love of music, of dancing, of riding? What in short is it in thee?

Filippo. Holy Father! I was ever of a hot and amorous constitution.

Eugenius. Well, well! I can guess, within a trifle, what that leads unto. I very much disapprove of it, whatever it may be. And then? and then? Prythee go on: I am inflamed with a miraculous zeal to cleanse thee.

Filippo. I have committed many follies, and some sins.

Eugenius. Let me hear the sins; I do not trouble my head about the follies; the Church has

no business with them. The state is founded on follies, the Church on sins. Come then, unsack them.

Filippo. Concupiscence is both a folly and a sin. I felt more and more of it when I ceased to be a monk, not having (for a time) so ready means of allaying it.

Eugenius. No doubt. Thou shouldst have thought again and again before thou strippedst off the cowl.

Filippo. Ah! Holy Father! I am sore at heart. I thought indeed how often it had held two heads together under it, and that stripping it off was double decapitation. But compensation and contentment came, and we were warm enough without it.

Eugenius. I am minded to reprove thee gravely. No wonder it pleased the Virgin, and the saints about her, to permit that the enemy of our faith should lead thee captive into Barbary.

Filippo. The pleasure was all on their side.

Eugenius. I have heard a great many stories both of males and females who were taken by Tunisians and Algerines: and although there is a sameness in certain parts of them, my especial benevolence toward thee, worthy Filippo, would induce me to lend a vacant ear to thy report. And now, good Filippo, I could sip a small glass of muscatel or Orvieto, and turn over a few bleached almonds, or essay a smart dried apricot at intervals, and listen while thou relatest to me the manners and customs of that country, and particularly as touching thy own adversities. First, how wast thou taken?

Filippo. I was visiting at Pesaro my wor-

shipful friend the canonico Andrea Paccone, who delighted in the guitar, played it skilfully, and was always fond of hearing it well accompanied by the voice. My own instrument I had brought with me, together with many gay Florentine songs, some of which were of such a turn and tendency, that the canonico thought they would sound better on water, and rather far from shore, than within the walls of the canonicate. He proposed then, one evening when there was little wind stirring, to exercise three young abbates [1] on their several parts, a little way out of hearing from the water's edge.

Eugenius. I disapprove of exercising young abbates in that manner.

Filippo. Inadvertently, O Holy Father! I have made the affair seem worse than it really was. In fact, there were only two genuine abbates; the third was Donna Lisetta, the good canonico's pretty niece, who looks so archly at your Holiness when you bend your knees before her at bed-time.

Eugenius. How? Where?

Filippo. She is the angel on the right-hand side of the Holy Family, with a tip of amethyst-coloured wing over a basket of figs and pomegranates. I painted her from memory: she was then only fifteen, and worthy to be the niece of an archbishop. Alas! she never will be: she plays and sings among the infidels, and perhaps would eat a landrail on a Friday as unreluctantly as she would a roach.

Eugenius. Poor soul! So this is the angel with the amethyst-coloured wing? I thought she

[1] Little boys, wearing clerical habits, are often called *abbati*.

looked wanton: we must pray for her release . . from the bondage of sin. What followed in your excursion?

Filippo. Singing, playing, fresh air, and plashing water, stimulated our appetites. We had brought no eatable with us but fruit and thin *marzopane*, of which the sugar and rose-water were inadequate to ward off hunger; and the sight of a fishing-vessel between us and Ancona, raised our host's immoderately. 'Yonder smack', said he, 'is sailing at this moment just over the very best sole-bank in the Adriatic. If she continues her course and we run toward her, we may be supplied, I trust in God, with the finest fish in Christendom. Methinks I see already the bellies of those magnificent soles bestar the deck, and emulate the glories of the orient sky.' He gave his orders with such a majestic air, that he looked rather like an admiral than a priest.

Eugenius. How now, rogue! Why should not the churchman look majestically and courageously? I myself have found occasion for it, and exerted it.

Filippo. The world knows the prowess of your Holiness.

Eugenius. Not mine, not mine, Filippo! but His who gave me the sword and the keys, and the will and the discretion to use them. I trust the canonico did not misapply his station and power, by taking the fish at any unreasonably low price; and that he gave his blessing to the remainder, and to the poor fishermen and to their nets.

Filippo. He was angry at observing that the vessel, while he thought it was within hail, stood out again to sea.

Eugenius He ought to have borne more manfully so slight a vexation.

Filippo. On the contrary, he swore bitterly he would have the master's ear between his thumb and forefinger in another half-hour, and regretted that he had cut his nails in the morning lest they should grate on his guitar. 'They may fish well,' cried he, 'but they can neither sail nor row; and, when I am in the middle of that tub of theirs, I will teach them more than they look for.' Sure enough he was in the middle of it at the time he fixed; but it was by aid of a rope about his arms, and the end of another laid lustily on his back and shoulders. 'Mount, lazy long-chined turnspit, as thou valuest thy life,' cried Abdul the corsair, 'and away for Tunis.' If silence is consent, he had it. The captain, in the Sicilian dialect, told us we might talk freely, for he had taken his siesta. 'Whose guitars are those?' said he. As the canonico raised his eyes to heaven and answered nothing, I replied, 'Sir, one is mine: the other is my worthy friend's there.' Next he asked the canonico to what market he was taking those young slaves, pointing to the abbates. The canonico sobbed and could not utter one word. I related the whole story; at which he laughed. He then took up the music, and commanded my reverend guest to sing an air peculiarly tender, invoking the compassion of a nymph, and calling her cold as ice. Never did so many or such profound sighs accompany it. When it ended, he sang one himself in his own language, on a lady whose eyes were exactly like the scimitars of Damascus, and whose eyebrows met in the middle like the cudgels of prize-fighters. On the whole she resembled both sun and moon, with the simple difference that she never allowed

herself to be seen, lest all the nations of the earth should go to war for her, and not a man be left to breathe out his soul before her. This poem had obtained the prize at the University of Fez, had been translated into the Arabic, the Persian, and the Turkish languages, and was the favourite lay of the corsair. He invited me lastly to try my talent. I played the same air on the guitar, and apologised for omitting the words, from my utter ignorance of the Moorish. Abdul was much pleased, and took the trouble to convince me that the poetry they conveyed, which he translated literally, was incomparably better than ours. 'Cold as ice!' he repeated, scoffing: 'anybody might say that who had seen Atlas: but a genuine poet would rather say, 'Cold as a lizard or a lobster.' There is no controverting a critic who has twenty stout rowers and twenty well-knotted rope-ends. Added to which, he seemed to know as much of the matter as the generality of those who talk about it. He was gratified by my attention and edification, and thus continued: 'I have remarked in the songs I have heard, that these wild woodland creatures of the west, these nymphs, are a strange fantastical race. But are your poets not ashamed to complain of their inconstancy? whose fault is that? If ever it should be my fortune to take one, I would try whether I could not bring her down to the level of her sex; and if her inconstancy caused any complaints, by Allah! they should be louder and shriller than ever rose from the throat of Abdul.' I still thought it better to be a disciple than a commentator.

Eugenius. If we could convert this barbarian

and detain him awhile at Rome, he would learn that women and nymphs (and inconstancy also) are one and the same. These cruel men have no lenity, no suavity. They who do not as they would be done by, are done by very much as they do. Women will glide away from them like water; they can better bear two masters than half one; and a new metal must be discovered before any bars are strong enough to confine them. But proceed with your narrative.

Filippo. Night had now closed upon us. Abdul placed the younger of the company apart, and after giving them some boiled rice, sent them down into his own cabin. The sailors, observing the consideration and distinction with which their master had treated me, were civil and obliging. Permission was granted me, at my request, to sleep on deck.

Eugenius. What became of your canonico?

Filippo. The crew called him a conger, a priest, and a porpoise.

Eugenius. Foul-mouthed knaves! could not one of these terms content them? On thy leaving Barbary was he left behind?

Filippo. Your Holiness consecrated him, the other day, Bishop of Macerata.

Eugenius. True, true; I remember the name, Saccone. How did he contrive to get off?

Filippo. He was worth little at any work; and such men are the quickest both to get off and to get on. Abdul told me he had received three thousand crowns for his ransom.

Eugenius. He was worth more to him than to me. I received but two first-fruits, and such other things as of right belong to me by inheritance.

The bishopric is passably rich: he may serve thee.

Filippo. While he was a canonico he was a jolly fellow; not very generous; for jolly fellows are seldom that; but he would give a friend a dinner, a flask of wine or two in preference, and a piece of advice as readily as either. I waited on Monsignor at Macerata, soon after his elevation.

Eugenius. He must have been heartily glad to embrace his companion in captivity, and the more especially as he himself was the cause of so grievous a misfortune.

Filippo. He sent me word he was so unwell he could not see me. 'What!' said I to his valet, 'is Monsignor's complaint in his eyes?' The fellow shrugged up his shoulders and walked away. Not believing that the message was a refusal to admit me, I went straight upstairs, and finding the door of an ante-chamber half open, and a chaplain milling an egg-posset over the fire, I accosted him. The air of familiarity and satisfaction he observed in me, left no doubt in his mind that I had been invited by his patron. 'Will the man never come?' cried his lordship. 'Yes, Monsignor!' exclaimed I, running in and embracing him; 'behold him here!' He started back, and then I first discovered the wide difference between an old friend and an egg-posset.

Eugenius. Son Filippo! thou hast seen but little of the world, and art but just come from Barbary. Go on.

Filippo. 'Fra Filippo!' said he gravely, 'I am glad to see you. I did not expect you just at present: I am not very well: I had ordered a medicine and was impatient to take it. If you

will favour me with the name of your inn, I will send for you when I am in a condition to receive you; perhaps within a day or two.' 'Monsignor!' said I, 'a change of residence often gives a man a cold, and oftener a change of fortune. Whether you caught yours upon deck (where we last saw each other), from being more exposed than usual, or whether the mitre holds wind, is no question for me, and no concern of mine.'

Eugenius. A just reproof, if an archbishop had made it. On uttering it, I hope thou kneeledst and kissedst his hand.

Filippo. I did not indeed.

Eugenius. O! there wert thou greatly in the wrong. Having, it is reported, a good thousand crowns yearly of patrimony, and a canonicate worth six hundred more, he might have attempted to relieve thee from slavery, by assisting thy relatives in thy redemption.

Filippo. The three thousand crowns were the uttermost he could raise, he declared to Abdul, and he asserted that a part of the money was contributed by the inhabitants of Pesaro. 'Do they act out of pure mercy?' said he. 'Ay, they must, for what else could move them in behalf of such a lazy unserviceable street-fed cur?' In the morning, at sunrise, he was sent aboard. And now, the vessel being under weigh, 'I have a letter from my lord Abdul,' said the master, 'which, being in thy language, two fellow slaves shall read unto thee publicly.' They came forward and began the reading. 'Yesterday I purchased these two slaves from a cruel unrelenting master, under whose lash they have laboured for nearly thirty years. I hereby give orders that five ounces

of my own gold be weighed out to them.' Here one of the slaves fell on his face; the other lifted up his hands, praised God, and blessed his benefactor.

Eugenius. The pirate? the unconverted pirate?

Filippo. Even so. 'Here is another slip of paper for thyself to read immediately in my presence,' said the master. The words it contained were, 'Do thou the same, or there enters thy lips neither food nor water until thou landest in Italy. I permit thee to carry away more than double the sum: I am no sutler: I do not contract for thy sustenance.' The canonico asked of the master whether he knew the contents of the letter; he replied, no. 'Tell your master, lord Abdul, that I shall take them into consideration.' 'My lord expected a much plainer answer, and commanded me, in case of any such as thou hast delivered, to break this seal.' He pressed it to his forehead and then broke it. Having perused the characters reverentially, 'Christian! dost thou consent?' The canonico fell on his knees, and overthrew the two poor wretches who, saying their prayers, had remained in the same posture before him quite unnoticed. 'Open thy trunk and take out thy money-bag, or I will make room for it in thy bladder.' The canonico was prompt in the execution of the command. The master drew out hi scales, and desired the canonico to weigh with his own hand five ounces. He groaned and trembled: the balance was unsteady. 'Throw in another piece: it will not vitiate the agreement,' cried the master. It was done. Fear and grief are among the thirsty passions, but add little to the appetite. It seemed, however, as if every sigh had left a vacancy in the stomach of the canonico.

At dinner the cook brought him a salted bonito, half an ell in length; and in five minutes his Reverence was drawing his middle finger along the white backbone, out of sheer idleness, until were placed before him some as fine dried locusts as ever provisioned the tents of Africa, together with olives the size of eggs and colour of bruises, shining in oil and brine. He found them savoury and pulpy, and, as the last love supersedes the foregoing, he gave them the preference, even over the delicate locusts. When he had finished them, he modestly requested a can of water. A sailor brought a large flask, and poured forth a plentiful supply. The canonico engulfed the whole, and instantly threw himself back in convulsive agony. 'How is this?' cried the sailor. The master ran up and, smelling the water, began to buffet him, exclaiming, as he turned round to all the crew, 'How came this flask here?' All were innocent. It appeared, however, that it was a flask of mineral water, strongly sulphureous, taken out of a Neapolitan vessel, laden with a great abundance of it for some hospital in the Levant. It had taken the captor by surprise in the same manner as the canonico. He himself brought out instantly a capacious stone jar covered with dew, and invited the sufferer into the cabin. Here he drew forth two richly-cut wine-glasses, and, on filling one of them, the outside of it turned suddenly pale, with a myriad of indivisible drops, and the senses were refreshed with the most delicious fragrance. He held up the glass between himself and his guest, and looking at it attentively, said, 'Here is no appearance of wine; all I can see is water. Nothing is wickeder than too much curiosity: we

must take what Allah sends us, and render thanks for it, although it fall far short of our expectations. Beside, our prophet would rather we should even drink wine than poison.' The canonico had not tasted wine for two months: a longer abstinence than ever canonico endured before. He drooped: but the master looked still more disconsolate. 'I would give whatever I possess on earth rather than die of thirst,' cried the canonico. 'Who would not?' rejoined the captain, sighing and clasping his fingers. 'If it were not contrary to my commands, I could touch at some cove or inlet.' 'Do, for the love of Christ!' exclaimed the canonico. 'Or even sail back,' continued the captain. 'O Santa Vergine!' cried in anguish the canonico. 'Despondency', said the captain, with calm solemnity, 'has left many a man to be thrown overboard: it even renders the plague, and many other disorders, more fatal. Thirst too has a powerful effect in exasperating them. Overcome such weaknesses, or I must do my duty. The health of the ship's company is placed under my care; and our lord Abdul, if he suspected the pest, would throw a Jew, or a Christian, or even a bale of silk, into the sea: such is the disinterestedness and magnanimity of my lord Abdul.' 'He believes in fate; does he not?' said the canonico. 'Doubtless: but he says it is as much fated that he should throw into the sea a fellow who is infected, as that the fellow should have ever been so.' 'Save me, O save me!' cried the canonico, moist as if the spray had pelted him. 'Willingly, if possible,' answered calmly the master. 'At present I can discover no certain symptoms; for sweat, unless followed

by general prostration, both of muscular strength and animal spirits, may be cured without a hook at the heel.' 'Giesu-Maria!' ejaculated the canonico.

Eugenius. And the monster could withstand that appeal?

Filippo. It seems so. The renegade who related to me, on my return, these events as they happened, was very circumstantial. He is a Corsican, and had killed many men in battle, and more out; but is (he gave me his word for it) on the whole an honest man.

Eugenius. How so? honest? and a renegade?

Filippo. He declared to me that, although the Mahomedan is the best religion to live in, the Christian is the best to die in; and that, when he has made his fortune, he will make his confession, and lie snugly in the bosom of the Church.

Eugenius. See here the triumphs of our holy faith! The lost sheep will be found again.

Filippo. Having played the butcher first.

Eugenius. Return we to that bad man, the master or captain, who evinced no such dispositions.

Filippo. He added, 'The other captives, though older men, have stouter hearts than thine.' 'Alas! they are longer used to hardships,' answered he. 'Dost thou believe, in thy conscience,' said the captain, 'that the water we have aboard would be harmless to them? for we have no other; and wine is costly; and our quantity might be insufficient for those who can afford to pay for it.' 'I will answer for their lives,' replied the canonico. 'With thy own?' interrogated sharply the Tunisian. 'I must not

tempt God,' said, in tears, the religious man. 'Let us be plain,' said the master. 'Thou knowest thy money is safe: I myself counted it before thee when I brought it from the scrivener's: thou hast sixty broad gold pieces: wilt thou be answerable, to the whole amount of them, for the lives of thy two countrymen if they drink this water?' 'O Sir!' said the canonico, 'I will give it, if, only for these few days of voyage, you vouchsafe me one bottle daily of that restorative wine of Bordeaux. The other two are less liable to the plague: they do not sorrow and sweat as I do. They are spare men. There is enough of me to infect a fleet with it; and I cannot bear to think of being anywise the cause of evil to my fellow-creatures.' 'The wine is my patron's,' cried the Tunisian; 'he leaves everything at my discretion: should I deceive him?' 'If he leaves everything at your discretion,' observed the logician of Pesaro, 'there is no deceit in disposing of it.' The master appeared to be satisfied with the argument. 'Thou shalt not find me exacting,' said he; 'give me the sixty pieces, and the wine shall be thine.' At a signal, when the contract was agreed to, the two slaves entered, bringing a hamper of jars. 'Read the contract before thou signest,' cried the master. He read. 'How is this? how is this? *Sixty golden ducats to the brothers Antonio and Bernabo Panini, for wine received from them?*' The aged men tottered under the stroke of joy; and Bernabo, who would have embraced his brother, fainted.

On the morrow there was a calm, and the weather was extremely sultry. The canonico sat in his shirt on deck, and was surprised to see, I

forget which of the brothers, drink from a goblet a prodigious draught of water. 'Hold!' cried he angrily; 'you may eat instead; but putrid or sulphureous water, you have heard, may produce the plague, and honest men be the sufferers by your folly and intemperance.' They assured him the water was tasteless, and very excellent, and had been kept cool in the same kind of earthen jars as the wine. He tasted it, and lost his patience. It was better, he protested, than any wine in the world. They begged his acceptance of the jar containing it. But the master, who had witnessed at a distance the whole proceeding, now advanced, and, placing his hand against it, said sternly, 'Let him have his own.' Usually, when he had emptied the second bottle, a desire of converting the Mahometans came over him: and they showed themselves much less obstinate and refractory than they are generally thought. He selected those for edification who swore the oftenest and the loudest by the Prophet; and he boasted in his heart of having overcome, by precept and example, the stiffest tenet of their abominable creed. Certainly they drank wine, and somewhat freely. The canonico clapped his hands, and declared that even some of the apostles had been more pertinacious recusants of the faith.

Eugenius. Did he so? Cappari! I would not have made him a bishop for twice the money if I had known it earlier. Could not he have left them alone? Suppose one or other of them did doubt and persecute, was he the man to blab it out among the heathen?

Filippo. A judgment, it appears, fell on him for so doing. A very quiet sailor, who had always

declined his invitations, and had always heard his arguments at a distance and in silence, being pressed and urged by him, and reproved somewhat arrogantly and loudly, as less docile than his messmates, at last lifted up his leg behind him, pulled off his right slipper, and counted deliberately and distinctly thirty-nine sound strokes of the same, on the canonico's broadest tablet, which (please your holiness) might be called, not inaptly, from that day, the tablet of memory. In vain he cried out. Some of the mariners made their moves at chess and waved their left hands as if desirous of no interruption; others went backward and forward about their business, and took no more notice than if their messmate was occupied in caulking a seam or notching a flint. The master himself, who saw the operation, heard the complaint in the evening, and lifted up his shoulders and eyebrows, as if the whole were quite unknown to him. Then, acting as judge-advocate, he called the young man before him and repeated the accusation. To this the defence was purely interrogative. 'Why would he convert me? I never converted him.' Turning to his spiritual guide, he said, 'I quite forgive thee: nay, I am ready to appear in thy favour, and to declare that, in general, thou hast been more decorous than people of thy faith and profession usually are, and hast not scattered on deck that inflammatory language which I, habited in the dress of a Greek, heard last Easter. I went into three churches; and the preachers in all three denounced the curse of Allah on every soul that differed from them a tittle. They were children of perdition, children of darkness, children of the devil, one and all. It

seemed a matter of wonder to me, that, in such numerous families and of such indifferent parentage, so many slippers were kept under the heel. Mine, in an evil hour, escaped me; but I quite forgive thee. After this free pardon I will indulge thee with a short specimen of my preaching. I will call none of you a generation of vipers, as ye call one another; for vipers neither bite nor eat during many months of the year: I will call none of you wolves in sheep's clothing; for if ye are, it must be acknowledged that the clothing is very clumsily put on. You priests, however, take people's souls aboard whether they will or not, just as we do your bodies: and you make them pay much more for keeping these in slavery, than we make you pay for setting you free body and soul together. You declare that the precious souls, to the especial care of which Allah has called and appointed you, frequently grow corrupt, and stink in his nostrils. Now, I invoke thy own testimony to the fact: thy soul, gross as I imagine it to be from the greasy wallet that holds it, had no carnal thoughts whatsoever, and that thy carcass did not even receive a fly-blow, while it was under my custody. Thy guardian angel (I speak it in humility) could not ventilate thee better. Nevertheless, I should scorn to demand a single maravedi for my labour and skill, or for the wear and tear of my pantoufle. My reward will be in Paradise, where a Houri is standing in the shade, above a vase of gold and silver fish, with a kiss on her lip, and an unbroken pair of green slippers in her hand for me.' Saying which, he took off his foot again the one he had been using, and showed the sole of it, first to the master, then to all the crew,

and declared it had become (as they might see) so smooth and oily by the application, that it was dangerous to walk on deck in it.

Eugenius. See! what notions these creatures have, both of their fool's paradise and of our holy faith! The seven sacraments, I warrant you, go for nothing! Purgatory, purgatory itself, goes for nothing!

Filippo. Holy Father! we must stop there. *That* does not go for nothing, however.

Eugenius. Filippo! God forbid I should suspect thee of any heretical taint; but this smells very like it. If thou hast it now, tell me honestly. I mean, hold thy tongue. Florentines are rather lax. Even Son Cosimo might be stricter: so they say: perhaps his enemies. The great always have them abundantly, beside those by whom they are served, and those also whom they serve. Now would I give a silver rose with my benediction on it, to know of a certainty what became of those poor creatures the abbates. The initiatory rite of Mahometanism is most diabolically malicious. According to the canons of our catholic Church, it disqualifies the neophyte for holy orders, without going so far as adapting him to the choir of the pontifical chapel. They limp; they halt.

Filippo. Beatitude! which of them?

Eugenius. The unbelievers: they surely are found wanting.

Filippo. The unbelievers too?

Eugenius. Ay, ay, thou half renegade! Couldst not thou go over with a purse of silver, and try whether the souls of these captives be recoverable? Even if they should have submitted to such unholy rites, I venture to say they have repented.

Filippo. The devil is in them if they have not.

Eugenius. They may become again as good Christians as before.

Filippo. Easily, methinks.

Eugenius. Not so easily; but by aid of Holy Church in the administration of indulgences.

Filippo. They never wanted those, whatever they want.

Eugenius. The corsair then is not one of those ferocious creatures which appear to connect our species with the lion and panther.

Filippo. By no means, Holy Father! He is an honest man; so are many of his countrymen, bating the sacrament.

Eugenius. Bating! poor beguiled Filippo! Being unbaptised, they are only as the beasts that perish: nay worse: for the soul being imperishable, it must stick to their bodies at the last day, whether they will or no, and must sink with it into the fire and brimstone.

Filippo. Unbaptised! why, they baptise every morning.

Eugenius. Worse and worse! I thought they only missed the stirrup; I find they overleap the saddle. Obstinate blind reprobates! of whom it is written . . of whom it is written . . of whom, I say, it is written . . as shall be manifest before men and angels in the day of wrath.

Filippo. More is the pity! for they are hospitable, frank, and courteous. It is delightful to see their gardens, when one has not the weeding and irrigation of them. What fruit! what foliage! what trellises! what alcoves! what a contest of rose and jessamine for supremacy in odour! of lute and nightingale for victory in song! And

how the little bright ripples of the docile brooks, the fresher for their races, leap up against one another, to look on! and how they chirrup and applaud, as if they too had a voice of some importance in these parties of pleasure that are loth to separate.

Eugenius. Parties of pleasure! birds, fruits, shallow-running waters, lute-players and wantons! Parties of pleasure! and composed of these! Tell me now, Filippo, tell me truly, what complexion in general have the discreeter females of that hapless country.

Filippo. The colour of an orange-flower, on which an over-laden bee has left a slight suffusion of her purest honey.

Eugenius. We must open their eyes.

Filippo. Knowing what excellent hides the slippers of this people are made of, I never once ventured on their less perfect theology, fearing to find it written that I should be abed on my face the next fortnight. My master had expressed his astonishment that a religion so admirable as ours was represented, should be the only one in the world the precepts of which are disregarded by all conditions of men. 'Our Prophet,' said he, 'our Prophet ordered us to go forth and conquer; we did it: yours ordered you to sit quiet and forbear; and, after spitting in his face, you threw the order back into it, and fought like devils.'

Eugenius. The barbarians talk of our Holy Scriptures as if they understood them perfectly. The impostor they follow has nothing but fustian and rodomontade in his impudent lying book from beginning to end. I know it, Filippo, from

those who have contrasted it, page by page, paragraph by paragraph, and have given the knave his due.

Filippo. Abdul is by no means deficient in a good opinion of his own capacity and his Prophet's all-sufficiency, but he never took me to task about my faith or his own.

Eugenius. How wert thou mainly occupied ?

Filippo. I will give your Holiness a sample both of my employments and of his character. He was going one evening to a country house, about fifteen miles from Tunis ; and he ordered me to accompany him. I found there a spacious garden, overrun with wild flowers and most luxuriant grass, in irregular tufts, according to the dryness or the humidity of the spot. The clematis overtopped the lemon- and orange-trees ; and the perennial pea sent forth here a pink blossom, here a purple, here a white one, and, after holding (as it were) a short conversation with the humbler plants, sprang up about an old cypress, played among its branches, and mitigated its gloom. White pigeons, and others in colour like the dawn of day, looked down on us and ceased to coo, until some of their companions, in whom they had more confidence, encouraged them loudly from remoter boughs, or alighted on the shoulders of Abdul, at whose side I was standing. A few of them examined me in every position their inquisitive eyes could take ; displaying all the advantages of their versatile necks, and pretending querulous fear in the midst of petulant approaches.

Eugenius. Is it of pigeons thou art talking, O Filippo ? I hope it may be.

Filippo. Of Abdul's pigeons. He was fond of

taming all creatures; men, horses, pigeons, equally: but he tamed them all by kindness. In this wilderness is an edifice not unlike our Italian chapter-houses built by the Lombards, with long narrow windows, high above the ground. The centre is now a bath, the waters of which, in another part of the enclosure, had supplied a fountain, at present in ruins, and covered by tufted canes, and by every variety of aquatic plants. The structure has no remains of roof: and, of six windows, one alone is unconcealed by ivy. This had been walled up long ago, and the cement in the inside of it was hard and polished. 'Lippi!' said Abdul to me, after I had long admired the place in silence, 'I leave to thy superintendence this bath and garden. Be sparing of the leaves and branches: make paths only wide enough for me. Let me see no mark of hatchet or pruning-hook, and tell the labourers that whoever takes a nest or an egg shall be impaled.'

Eugenius. Monster! so then he would really have impaled a poor wretch for eating a bird's egg? How disproportionate is the punishment to the offence!

Filippo. He efficiently checked in his slaves the desire of transgressing his command. To spare them as much as possible, I ordered them merely to open a few spaces, and to remove the weaker trees from the stronger. Meanwhile I drew on the smooth blank window the figure of Abdul and of a beautiful girl.

Eugenius. Rather say handmaiden: choicer expression; more decorous.

Filippo. Holy Father! I have been lately so much out of practice, I take the first that comes

in my way. Handmaiden I will use in preference for the future.

Eugenius. On then! and God speed thee!

Filippo. I drew Abdul with a blooming handmaiden. One of his feet is resting on her lap, and she is drying the ankle with a saffron robe, of which the greater part is fallen in doing it. That she is a bondmaid is discernible, not only by her occupation, but by her humility and patience, by her loose and flowing brown hair, and by her eyes expressing the timidity at once of servitude and of fondness. The countenance was taken from fancy, and was the loveliest I could imagine: of the figure I had some idea, having seen it to advantage in Tunis. After seven days Abdul returned. He was delighted with the improvement made in the garden. I requested him to visit the bath. 'We can do nothing to that,' answered he impatiently. 'There is no sudatory, no dormitory, no dressing-room, no couch. Sometimes I sit an hour there in the summer, because I never found a fly in it; the principal curse of hot countries, and against which plague there is neither prayer nor amulet, nor indeed any human defence.' He went away into the house. At dinner he sent me from his table some quails and ortolans, and tomatoes and honey and rice, beside a basket of fruit covered with moss and bay-leaves, under which I found a verdino fig, deliciously ripe, and bearing the impression of several small teeth, but certainly no reptile's.

Eugenius. There might have been poison in them, for all that.

Filippo. About two hours had passed, when I heard a whirr and a crash in the windows of the

bath (where I had dined and was about to sleep), occasioned by the settling and again the flight of some pheasants. Abdul entered. 'Beard of the Prophet! what hast thou been doing? That is myself! No, no, Lippi! thou never canst have seen her: the face proves it: but those limbs! thou hast divined them aright: thou hast had sweet dreams then! Dreams are large possessions: in them the possessor may cease to possess his own. To the slave, O Allah! to the slave is permitted what is not his! . . I burn with anguish to think how much . . yea, at that very hour. I would not another should, even in a dream . . But, Lippi! thou never canst have seen above the sandal?' To which I answered, 'I never have allowed my eyes to look even on that. But if any one of my lord Abdul's fair slaves resembles, as they surely must all do, in duty and docility, the figure I have represented, let it express to him my congratulation on his happiness.' 'I believe', said he, 'such representations are forbidden by the Koran; but as I do not remember it, I do not sin. There it shall stay, unless the angel Gabriel comes to forbid it.' He smiled in saying so.

Eugenius. There is hope of this Abdul. His faith hangs about him more like oil than pitch.

Filippo. He inquired of me whether I often thought of those I loved in Italy, and whether I could bring them before my eyes at will. To remove all suspicion from him, I declared I always could, and that one beautiful object occupied all the cells of my brain by night and day. He paused and pondered, and then said, 'Thou dost not love deeply.' I thought I had given the true

signs. 'No, Lippi! we who love ardently, we, with all our wishes, all the efforts of our souls, cannot bring before us the features which, while they were present, we thought it impossible we ever could forget. Alas! when we most love the absent, when we most desire to see her, we try in vain to bring her image back to us. The troubled heart shakes and confounds it, even as ruffled waters do with shadows. Hateful things are more hateful when they haunt our sleep: the lovely flee away, or are changed into less lovely.'

Eugenius. What figures now have these unbelievers?

Filippo. Various in their combinations as the letters or the numerals; but they all, like these, signify something. Almeida (did I not inform your Holiness?) has large hazel eyes . . .

Eugenius. Has she? thou never toldest me that. Well, well! and what else has she? Mind! be cautious! use decent terms.

Filippo. Somewhat pouting lips.

Eugenius. Ha! ha! What did they pout at?

Filippo. And she is rather plump than otherwise.

Eugenius. No harm in that.

Filippo. And moreover is cool, smooth, and firm as a nectarine gathered before sunrise.

Eugenius. Ha! ha! do not remind me of nectarines. I am very fond of them; and this is not the season! Such females as thou describest, are said to be among the likeliest to give reasonable cause for suspicion. I would not judge harshly, I would not think uncharitably; but, unhappily, being at so great a distance from spiritual aid, peradventure a desire, a suggestion, an inkling . .

ay ? If she, the lost Almeida, came before thee when her master was absent . . which I trust she never did. . . But those flowers and shrubs and odours and alleys and long grass and alcoves, might strangely hold, perplex, and entangle, two incautious young persons . . ay ?

Filippo. I confessed all I had to confess in this matter, the evening I landed.

Eugenius. Ho ! I am no candidate for a seat at the rehearsal of confessions : but perhaps my absolution might be somewhat more pleasing and unconditional. Well ! well ! since I am unworthy of such confidence, go about thy business . . paint ! paint !

Filippo. Am I so unfortunate as to have offended your Beatitude ?

Eugenius. Offend *me*, man ! who offends *me* ? I took an interest in thy adventures, and was concerned lest thou mightest have sinned ; for by my soul ! Filippo ! those are the women that the devil hath set his mark on.

Filippo. It would do your Holiness's heart good to rub it out again, wherever he may have had the cunning to make it.

Eugenius. Deep ! deep !

Filippo. Yet it may be got at ; she being a Biscayan by birth, as she told me, and not only baptised, but going by sea along the coast for confirmation, when she was captured.

Eugenius. Alas ! to what an imposition of hands was this tender young thing devoted ! Poor soul !

Filippo. I sigh for her myself when I think of her.

Eugenius. Beware lest the sigh be mundane,

and lest the thought recur too often. I wish it were presently in my power to examine her myself on her condition. What thinkest thou? Speak.

Filippo. Holy Father! she would laugh in your face.

Eugenius. So lost!

Filippo. She declared to me she thought she should have died, from the instant she was captured until she was comforted by Abdul: but that she was quite sure she should if she were ransomed.

Eugenius. Has the wretch then shaken her faith?

Filippo. The very last thing he would think of doing. Never did I see the virtue of resignation in higher perfection than in the laughing light-hearted Almeida.

Eugenius. Lamentable! Poor lost creature! lost in this world and in the next.

Filippo. What could she do? how could she help herself?

Eugenius. She might have torn his eyes out, and have died a martyr.

Filippo. Or have been bastinadoed, whipped, and given up to the cooks and scullions for it.

Eugenius. Martyrdom is the more glorious the greater the indignities it endures.

Filippo. Almeida seems unambitious. There are many in our Tuscany who would jump at the crown over those sloughs and briars, rather than perish without them: she never sighs after the like.

Eugenius. Nevertheless, what must she witness! what abominations! what superstitions!

Filippo. Abdul neither practises nor exacts any other superstition than ablutions.

Eugenius. Detestable rites! without our authority. I venture to affirm that, in the whole of Italy and Spain, no convent of monks or nuns contains a bath; and that the worst inmate of either would shudder at the idea of observing such a practice in common with the unbeliever. For the washing of the feet indeed we have the authority of the earlier Christians; and it may be done; but solemnly and sparingly. Thy residence among the Mahometans, I am afraid, hath rendered thee more favourable to them than beseems a Catholic, and thy mind, I do suspect, sometimes goes back into Barbary unreluctantly.

Filippo. While I continued in that country, although I was well treated, I often wished myself away, thinking of my friends in Florence, of music, of painting, of our villegiatura at the vintage-time, whether in the green and narrow glades of Pratolino, with lofty trees above us, and little rills unseen, and little bells about the necks of sheep and goats, tinkling together ambiguously; or amid the grey quarries or under the majestic walls of ancient Fiesole; or down in the woods of the Doccia, where the cypresses are of such a girth that, when a youth stands against one of them, and a maiden stands opposite, and they clasp it, their hands at the time do little more than meet. Beautiful scenes, on which Heaven smiles eternally, how often has my heart ached for you! He who hath lived in this country, can enjoy no distant one. He breathes here another air; he lives more life; a brighter sun invigorates his studies, and serener stars influence his repose. Barbary hath also the blessing of climate; and although I do not desire to be there again, I feel

sometimes a kind of regret at leaving it. A bell warbles the more mellifluously in the air when the sound of the stroke is over, and when another swims out from underneath it, and pants upon the element that gave it birth. In like manner the recollection of a thing is frequently more pleasing than the actuality; what is harsh is dropped in the space between. There is in Abdul a nobility of soul on which I often have reflected with admiration. I have seen many of the highest rank and distinction, in whom I could find nothing of the great man, excepting a fondness for low company, and an aptitude to shy and start at every spark of genius or virtue that sprang up above or before them. Abdul was solitary, but affable: he was proud, but patient and complacent. I ventured once to ask him, how the master of so rich a house in the city, of so many slaves, of so many horses and mules, of such cornfields, of such pastures, of such gardens, woods, and fountains, should experience any delight or satisfaction in infesting the open sea, the high-road of nations? Instead of answering my question, he asked me in return, whether I would not respect any relative of mine who avenged his country, enriched himself by his bravery, and endeared to him his friends and relatives by his bounty? On my reply in the affirmative, he said that his family had been deprived of possessions in Spain, much more valuable than all the ships and cargoes he could ever hope to capture, and that the remains of his nation were threatened with ruin and expulsion. 'I do not fight', said he, 'whenever it suits the convenience, or gratifies the malignity, or the caprice, of two silly quarrelsome princes, drawing

my sword in perfectly good humour, and sheathing it again at word of command, just when I begin to get into a passion. No; I fight on my own account; not as a hired assassin, or still baser journeyman.'

Eugenius. It appears then really that the infidels have some semblances of magnanimity and generosity?

Filippo. I thought so when I turned over the many changes of fine linen; and I was little short of conviction when I found at the bottom of my chest two hundred Venetian zecchins.

Eugenius. Corpo di Bacco! Better things, far better things, I would fain do for thee, not exactly of this description; it would excite many heart-burnings. Information has been laid before me, Filippo, that thou art attached to a certain young person, by name Lucrezia, daughter of Francesco Buti, a citizen of Prato.

Filippo. I acknowledge my attachment: it continues.

Eugenius. Furthermore, that thou hast offspring by her.

Filippo. Alas! 'tis undeniable.

Eugenius. I will not only legitimatize the said offspring by *motu proprio* and rescript to consistory and chancery . .

Filippo. Holy Father! Holy Father! For the love of the Virgin, not a word to consistory or chancery of the two hundred zecchins. As I hope for salvation, I have but forty left: and thirty-nine would not serve them.

Eugenius. Fear nothing. Not only will I perform what I have promised, not only will I give the strictest order that no money be demanded by

any officer of my courts, but, under the seal of Saint Peter, I will declare thee and Lucrezia Buti man and wife.

Filippo. Man and wife!

Eugenius. Moderate thy transport.

Filippo. O Holy Father! may I speak?

Eugenius. Surely she is not the wife of another?

Filippo. No indeed.

Eugenius. Nor within the degrees of consanguinity and affinity?

Filippo. No, no, no. But . . man and wife! Consistory and chancery are nothing to this fulmination.

Eugenius. How so?

Filippo. It is man and wife the first fortnight, but wife and man ever after. The two figures change places: the unit is the decimal and the decimal is the unit.

Eugenius. What then can I do for thee?

Filippo. I love Lucrezia: let me love her: let her love me. I can make her at any time what she is not: I could never make her again what she is.

Eugenius. The only thing I can do then is to promise I will forget that I have heard anything about the matter. But, to forget it, I must hear it first.

Filippo. In the beautiful little town of Prato, reposing in its idleness against the hill that protects it from the north, and looking over fertile meadows, southward to Poggio Cajano, westward to Pistoja, there is the convent of Santa Margarita. I was invited by the sisters to paint an altar-piece for the chapel. A novice of fifteen, my own sweet Lucrezia, came one day alone to see me work

at my Madonna. Her blessed countenance had already looked down on every beholder lower by the knees. I myself who made her could almost have worshipped her.

Eugenius. Not while incomplete: no half-virgin will do.

Filippo. But there knelt Lucrezia! there she knelt! first looking with devotion at the Madonna, then with admiring wonder and grateful delight at the artist. Could so little a heart be divided? 'Twere a pity! There was enough for me: there is never enough for the Madonna. Resolving on a sudden that the object of my love should be the object of adoration to thousands, born and unborn, I swept my brush across the maternal face, and left a blank in heaven. The little girl screamed: I pressed her to my bosom.

Eugenius. In the chapel?

Filippo. I knew not where I was: I thought I was in Paradise.

Eugenius. If it was not in the chapel, the sin is venial. But a brush against a Madonna's mouth is worse than a beard against her votary's.

Filippo. I thought so too, Holy Father!

Eugenius. Thou sayest thou hast forty zecchins: I will try in due season to add forty more. The fisherman must not venture to measure forces with the pirate. Farewell! I pray God, my son Filippo, to have thee alway in his holy keeping.

HENRY VIII AND ANNE BOLEYN

Henry. Dost thou know me, Nanny, in this yeoman's dress? 'S blood! does it require so long and vacant a stare to recollect a husband after a week or two? No tragedy-tricks with me! a scream, a sob, or thy kerchief a trifle the wetter, were enough. Why, verily the little fool faints in earnest. These whey faces, like their kinsfolk the ghosts, give us no warning. (*Sprinkling water over her*) Hast had water enough upon thee? take that then . . . art thyself again?

Anne. Father of mercies! do I meet again my husband, as was my last prayer on earth! do I behold my beloved lord . . . in peace . . . and pardoned, my partner in eternal bliss! It was his voice. I cannot see him . . . why cannot I? O why do these pangs interrupt the transports of the blessed!

Henry. Thou openest thy arms: faith! I came for that: Nanny, thou art a sweet slut: thou groanest, wench: art in labour? Faith! among the mistakes of the night, I am ready to think almost that thou hast been drinking, and that I have not.

Anne. God preserve your highness: grant me your forgiveness for one slight offence. My eyes were heavy; I fell asleep while I was reading; I did not know of your presence at first, and when I did I could not speak. I strove for utterance; I wanted no respect for my liege and husband.

Henry. My pretty warm nestling, thou wilt

then lie! Thou wert reading and aloud too, with thy saintly cup of water by thee, and . . . what! thou art still girlishly fond of those dried cherries!

Anne. I had no other fruit to offer your highness the first time I saw you, and you were then pleased to invent for me some reason why they should be acceptable. I did not dry these: may I present them, such as they are? We shall have fresh next month.

Henry. Thou art always driving away from the discourse. One moment it suits thee to know me, another not.

Anne. Remember, it is hardly three months since I miscarried; I am weak and liable to swoons.

Henry. Thou hast however thy bridal cheeks, with lustre upon them when there is none elsewhere, and obstinate lips resisting all impression: but now thou talkest about miscarrying, who is the father of that boy?

Anne. The father is yours and mine; he who hath taken him to his own home, before (like me) he could struggle or cry for it.

Henry. Pagan, or worse, to talk so! He did not come into the world alive: there was no baptism.

Anne. I thought only of our loss: my senses are confounded. I did not give him my milk, and yet I loved him tenderly; for I often fancied, had he lived, how contented and joyful he would have made you and England.

Henry. No subterfuges and escapes. I warrant, thou canst not say whether at my entrance thou wert waking or wandering.

Anne. Faintness and drowsiness came upon me suddenly.

Henry. Well, since thou really and truly sleepedst, what didst dream of ?

Anne. I begin to doubt whether I did indeed sleep.

Henry. Ha ! false one . . . never two sentences of truth together . . . but come, what didst think about, asleep or awake ?

Anne. I thought that God had pardoned me my offences, and had received me unto him.

Henry. And nothing more ?

Anne. That my prayers had been heard and my wishes were accomplishing : the angels alone can enjoy more beatitude than this.

Henry. Vexatious little devil ! she says nothing now about me, merely from perverseness . . . Hast thou never thought about me, nor about thy falsehood and adultery ?

Anne. If I had committed any kind of falsehood, in regard to you or not, I should never have rested until I had thrown myself at your feet and obtained your pardon : but if ever I had been guilty of that other crime, I know not whether I should have dared to implore it, even of God's mercy.

Henry. Thou hast heretofore cast some soft glances upon Smeaton ; hast thou not ?

Anne. He taught me to play on the virginals, as you know, when I was little, and thereby to please your highness.

Henry. And Brereton and Norris, what have they taught thee ?

Anne. They are your servants, and trusty ones.

Henry. Has not Weston told thee plainly that he loved thee ?

Anne. Yes ; and . . .

Henry. What didst thou ?

Anne. I defied him.

Henry. Is that all ?

Anne. I could have done no more if he had told me that he hated me. Then indeed I should have incurred more justly the reproaches of your highness : I should have smiled.

Henry. We have proofs abundant : the fellows shall one and all confront thee . . . ay, clap thy hands and kiss my sleeve, harlot !

Anne. O that so great a favour is vouchsafed me ! my honour is secure ; my husband will be happy again ; he will see my innocence.

Henry. Give me now an account of the monies thou hast received from me within these nine months : I want them not back : they are letters of gold in record of thy guilt. Thou hast had no fewer than fifteen thousand pounds in that period, without even thy asking ; what hast done with it, wanton ?

Anne. I have regularly placed it out to interest.

Henry. Where ? I demand of thee.

Anne. Among the needy and ailing. My lord archbishop has the account of it, sealed by him weekly : I also had a copy myself : those who took away my papers may easily find it, for there are few others, and they lie open.

Henry. Think on my munificence to thee ; recollect who made thee. Dost sigh for what thou hast lost ?

Anne. I do indeed.

Henry. I never thought thee ambitious ; but thy vices creep out one by one.

Anne. I do not regret that I have been a queen and am no longer one ; nor that my innocence is

called in question by those who never knew me: but I lament that the good people who loved me so cordially, hate and curse me; that those who pointed me out to their daughters for imitation, check them when they speak about me; and that he whom next to God I have served with most devotion, is my accuser.

Henry. Wast thou conning over something in that dingy book for thy defence? Come, tell me, what wast thou reading?

Anne. This ancient chronicle. I was looking for some one in my own condition, and must have missed the page. Surely in so many hundred years, there shall have been other young maidens, first too happy for exaltation, and after too exalted for happiness: not perchance doomed to die upon a scaffold, by those they ever honoured and served faithfully: that indeed I did not look for nor think of: but my heart was bounding for any one I could love and pity. She would be unto me as a sister dead and gone, but hearing me, seeing me, consoling me, and being consoled. O my husband, it is so heavenly a thing . . .

Henry. To whine and whimper, no doubt, is vastly heavenly.

Anne. I said not so: but those, if there be any such, who never weep, have nothing in them of heavenly or of earthly. The plants, the trees, the very rocks and unsunned clouds, show us at least the semblances of weeping: and there is not an aspect of the globe we live on, nor of the waters and skies around it, without a reference and a similitude to our joys or sorrows.

Henry. I do not remember that notion anywhere. Take care no enemy rake out of it some-

thing of materialism. Guard well thy empty hot brain: it may hatch more evil. As for those odd words, I myself would fain see no great harm in them, knowing that grief and frenzy strike out many things, which would else lie still, and neither spirt nor sparkle. I also know that thou hast never read anything but Bible and history, the two worst books in the world for young people, and the most certain to lead astray both prince and subject. For which reason I have interdicted and entirely put down the one, and will (by the blessing of the Virgin and of holy Paul) commit the other to a rigid censor. If it behoves us kings to enact what our people shall eat and drink, of which the most unruly and rebellious spirit can entertain no doubt, greatly more doth it behove us to examine what they read and think. The body is moved according to the mind and will: we must take care that the movement be a right one, on pain of God's anger in this life and the next.

Anne. O my dear husband! it must be a naughty thing indeed that makes him angry beyond remission. Did you ever try how pleasant it is to forgive anyone? There is nothing else wherein we can resemble God perfectly and easily.

Henry. Resemble God perfectly and easily! Do vile creatures talk thus of the Creator?

Anne. No, Henry, when his creatures talk thus of him, they are no longer vile creatures! When they know that he is good they love him, and when they love him they are good themselves. O Henry! my husband and king! the judgments of our Heavenly Father are righteous: on this surely we must think alike.

Henry. And what then? speak out: again I command thee, speak plainly: thy tongue was not so torpid but this moment. Art ready? must I wait?

Anne. If any doubt remains upon your royal mind of your equity in this business; should it haply seem possible to you that passion or prejudice, in yourself or another, may have warped so strong an understanding, do but supplicate the Almighty to strengthen and enlighten it, and he will hear you.

Henry. What! thou wouldst fain change thy quarters, ay?

Anne. My spirit is detached and ready, and I shall change them shortly, whatever your highness may determine. Ah! my native Bickling is a pleasant place. May I go back to it? Does that kind smile say *yes*? Do the hounds ever run that way now? The fruit-trees must be all in full blossom, and the gorse on the hill above quite dazzling. How good it was in you to plant your park at Greenwich after my childish notion, tree for tree, the very same as at Bickling! Has the hard winter killed them? or the winds loosened the stakes about them?

Henry. Silly child! as if thou shouldst see them any more.

Anne. Alas! what strange things happen! But they and I are nearly of the same age; young alike, and without hold upon anything.

Henry. Yet thou appearest hale and resolute, and (they tell me) smirkest and smilest to everybody.

Anne. The withered leaf catches the sun sometimes, little as it can profit by it; and I have heard stories of the breeze in other climates, that sets

in when daylight is about to close, and how constant it is, and how refreshing. My heart indeed is now sustained strangely: it became the more sensibly so from that time forward, when power and grandeur and all things terrestrial were sunk from sight. Every act of kindness in those about me gives me satisfaction, and pleasure, such as I did not feel formerly. I was worse before God chastened me; yet I was never an ingrate. What pains have I taken to find out the village girls who placed their posies in my chamber ere I arose in the morning! how gladly would I have recompensed the forester who lit up a brake on my birthnight, which else had warmed him half the winter! But these are times past: I was not Queen of England.

Henry. Nor adulterous, nor heretical.

Anne. God be praised!

Henry. Learned saint! thou knowest nothing of the lighter, but perhaps canst inform me about the graver of them.

Anne. Which may it be, my liege?

Henry. Which may it be, pestilence! I marvel that the walls of this tower do not crack around thee at such impiety.

Anne. I would be instructed by the wisest of theologians: such is your highness.

Henry. Are the sins of the body, foul as they are, comparable to those of the soul?

Anne. When they are united they must be worst.

Henry. Go on, go on: thou pushest thy own breast against the sword: God hath deprived thee of thy reason for thy punishment. I must hear more; proceed, I charge thee.

Anne. An aptitude to believe one thing rather than another, from ignorance or weakness, or from the more persuasive manner of the teacher, or from his purity of life, or from the strong impression of a particular text at a particular time, and various things beside, may influence and decide our opinion; and the hand of the Almighty, let us hope, will fall gently on human fallibility.

Henry. Opinion in matters of faith! rare wisdom! rare religion! Troth! Anne, thou hast well sobered me. I came rather warmly and lovingly; but these light ringlets, by the holy rood, shall not shade this shoulder much longer. Nay, do not start; I tap it for the last time, my sweetest. If the church permitted it, thou shouldst set forth on thy long journey with the eucharist between thy teeth, however loth.

Anne. Love your Elizabeth, my honoured lord, and God bless you! She will soon forget to call me: do not chide her: think how young she is.

Could I, could I kiss her, but once again! it would comfort my heart . . . or break it.

MELANCTHON AND CALVIN

Calvin. Are you sure, O Melancthon! that you yourself are among the elect?

Melancthon. My dear brother! so please it God, I would rather be among the many.

Calvin. Of the damned?

Melancthon. Alas! no. But I am inclined to believe that the many will be saved and will be

happy, since Christ came into the world for the redemption of sinners.

Calvin. Hath not our Saviour said explicitly, that many are called, but few chosen.

Melancthon. Our Saviour ? hath he said it ?

Calvin. *Hath* he forsooth ! Where is your New Testament ?

Melancthon. In my heart.

Calvin. Without this page, however.

Melancthon. When we are wiser and more docile, that is, when we are above the jars and turmoils and disputations of the world, our Saviour will vouchsafe to interpret what, through the fumes of our intemperate vanity, is now indistinct or dark. He will plead for us before no inexorable judge. He came to remit the sins of man ; not the sins of a few, but of many ; not the sins of many, but of all.

Calvin. What ! of the benighted heathen too ? of the pagan ? of the idolater ?

Melancthon. I hope so ; but I dare not say it.

Calvin. You would include even the negligent, the indifferent, the sceptic, the unbeliever.

Melancthon. Pitying them for a want of happiness in a want of faith. They are my brethren : they are God's children. He will pardon the presumption of my wishes for their welfare ; my sorrow that they have fallen, some through their blindness, others through their deafness, others through their terror, others through their anger peradventure at the loud denunciations of unforgiving man. If I would forgive a brother, may not he, who is immeasurably better and more merciful, have pity on a child ? He came on earth to take our nature upon him : will he punish, will

he reprehend us, for an attempt to take as much as may be of his upon ourselves ?

Calvin. There is no bearing any such fallacies.

Melancthon. Is it harder to bear these fallacies (as they appear to you, and perhaps are, for we all are fallible, and many even of our best thoughts are fallacies), is it harder, O my friend, to bear these, than to believe in the eternal punishment of the erroneous ?

Calvin. Erroneous indeed ! Have they not the Book of Life, now at last laid open before them, for their guidance ?

Melancthon. No, indeed ; they have only two or three places, dogs-eared and bedaubed, which they are commanded to look into and study. These are so uninviting, that many close again the volume of salvation, clasp it tight, and throw it back in our faces. I would rather show a man green fields than gibbets : and if I called him to enter the service of a plenteous house and powerful master, he may not be rendered the more willing to enter it by my pointing out to him the stocks in the gateway, and telling him that nine-tenths of the household, however orderly, must occupy that position. The book of *good news* under your interpretation tells people not only that they may go and be damned, but that unless they are lucky, they must inevitably. Again it informs another set of inquirers that if once they have been under what they feel to be the influence of grace, they never can relapse. All must go well who have once gone well ; and a name once written in the list of favourites can never be erased.

Calvin. This is certain.

Melancthon. Let us hope then, and in holy con-

fidence let us believe, that the book is large and voluminous; that it begins at an early date of man's existence; and that amid the agitation of inquiry, it comprehends the humble and submissive doubter. For doubt itself, between the richest patrimony and utter destitution, is quite sufficiently painful: and surely it is a hardship to be turned over into a criminal court for having lost in a civil one. But if all who have once gone right can never go astray, how happens it that so large a part of the angels fell off from their allegiance? They were purer and wiser than we are, and had the advantage of seeing God face to face. They were the ministers of his power; they knew its extent; yet they defied it. If we err, it is in relying too confidently on his mercies; not in questioning his omnipotence. If our hopes forsake us, if the bonds of sin bruise and corrode us, so that we cannot walk upright, there is, in the midst of these calamities, no proof that we are utterly lost. Danger far greater is there in the presumption of an especial favour, which men incomparably better than ourselves can never have deserved. Let us pray, O Calvin, that we may hereafter be happier than our contentions and animosities will permit us to be at present; and that our opponents, whether now in the right or in the wrong, may come at last where all error ceases.

Calvin. I am uncertain whether such a wish is rational: and I doubt more whether it is religious. God hath willed them to walk in their blindness. To hope against it, seems like repining at his unalterable decree; a weak indulgence in an unpermitted desire; an unholy entreaty of the

heart that he will forgo his vengeance, and abrogate the law that was from the beginning. Of one thing I am certain: we must lop off the unsound.

Melancthon. What a curse hath metaphor been to religion! It is the wedge that holds asunder the two great portions of the Christian world. We hear of nothing so commonly as fire and sword. And here indeed what was metaphor is converted into substance and applied to practice. The unsoundness of doctrine is not cut off nor cauterised; the professor is. The head falls on the scaffold, or fire surrounds the stake, because a doctrine is bloodless and incombustible. Fierce outrageous animals, for want of the man who has escaped them, lacerate and trample his cloak or bonnet. This, although the work of brutes, is not half so brutal as the practice of theologians, seizing the man himself, instead of bonnet or cloak.

Calvin.. We must leave such matters to the magistrate.

Melancthon. Let us instruct the magistrate in his duty; this is ours. Unless we can teach humanity, we may resign the charge of religion. For fifteen centuries, Christianity has been conveyed into many houses, in many cities, in many regions, but always through slender pipes; and never yet into any great reservoir in any part of the earth. Its principal ordinances have never been observed in the polity of any state whatever. Abstinence from spoliation, from oppression, from bloodshed, has never been inculcated by the chief priests of any. These two facts excite the doubts of many in regard to a divine origin and a divine protection. Wherefore it behoves us the more

especially to preach forbearance. If the people are tolerant one toward another in the same country, they will become tolerant in time toward those whom rivers or seas have separated from them. For surely it is strange and wonderful that nations which are near enough for hostility should never be near enough for concord. This arises from bad government; and bad government arises from a negligent choice of counsellors by the prince, usually led or terrified by a corrupt, ambitious, wealthy (and therefore unchristian) priesthood. While their wealth lay beyond the visible horizon, they tarried at the cottage, instead of pricking on for the palace.

Calvin. By the grace and help of God we will turn them back again to their quiet and wholesome resting-place, before the people lay a rough hand upon the silk.

But you evaded my argument on predestination.

Melancthon. Our blessed Lord himself, in his last hours, ventured to express a wish before his heavenly Father, that the bitter cup might pass away from him. I humbly dare to implore that a cup much bitterer may be removed from the great body of mankind; a cup containing the poison of eternal punishment, where agony succeeds to agony, but never death.

Calvin. I come armed with the Gospel.

Melancthon. Tremendous weapon! as we have seen it through many ages, if man wields it against man: but like the fabled spear of old mythology, endued with the faculty of healing the saddest wound its most violent wielder can inflict. Obscured and rusting with the blood upon it, let us

hasten to take it up again, and apply it, as best we may, to its appointed uses.

The life of our Saviour is the simplest exposition of his words. Strife is what he both discountenanced and forbade. We ourselves are right-minded, each of us all: and others are right-minded in proportion as they agree with us, chiefly in matters which we insist are well worthy of our adherence, but which whosoever refuses to embrace displays a factious and unchristian spirit. These for the most part are matters which neither they nor we understand, and which, if we did understand them, would little profit us. The weak will be supported by the strong, if they can; if they cannot they are ready to be supported even by the weaker, and cry out against the strong, as arrogant or negligent, or deaf or blind; at last even their strength is questioned, and the more if, while there is fury all around them, they are quiet.

I remember no discussion on religion in which religion was not a sufferer by it, if mutual forbearance and belief in another's good motives and intentions are (as I must always think they are) its proper and necessary appurtenances.

Calvin. Would you never make inquiries?

Melancthon. Yes; and as deep as possible; but into my own heart; for that belongs to me; and God hath entrusted it most especially to my own superintendence.

Calvin. We must also keep others from going astray, by showing them the right road, and, if they are obstinate in resistance, then by coercing and chastising them through the magistrate.

Melancthon. It is sorrowful to dream that we

are scourges in God's hand, and that he appoints for us no better work than lacerating one another. I am no enemy to inquiry, where I see abuses, and where I suspect falsehood. The Romanists, our great oppressors, think it presumptuous to search into things abstruse; and let us do them the justice to acknowledge that, if it is a fault, it is one which they never commit. But surely we are kept sufficiently in the dark by the infirmity of our nature: no need to creep into a corner and put our hands before our eyes. To throw away or turn aside from God's best gifts is verily a curious sign of obedience and submission. He not only hath given us a garden to walk in, but he hath planted it also for us, and he wills us to know the nature and properties of everything that grows up within it. Unless we look into them and handle them and register them, how shall we discover this to be salutary, that to be poisonous; this annual, that perennial?

Calvin. Here we coincide; and I am pleased to find in you less apathy than I expected. It becomes us, moreover, to denounce God's vengeance on a sinful world.

Melancthon. Is it not better and pleasanter to show the wanderer by what course of life it may be avoided? is it not better and pleasanter to enlarge on God's promises of salvation, than to insist on his denunciations of wrath? is it not better and pleasanter to lead the wretched up to his mercy-seat, than to hurl them by thousands under his fiery chariot?

Calvin. We have no option. By our heavenly Father many are called, but few are chosen.

Melancthon. There is scarcely a text in the Holy

Scriptures to which there is not an opposite text, written in characters equally large and legible; and there has usually been a sword laid upon each. Even the weakest disputant is made so conceited by what he calls religion, as to think himself wiser than the wisest who thinks differently from him; and he becomes so ferocious by what he calls holding it fast, that he appears to me as if he held it fast much in the same manner as a terrier holds a rat, and you have about as much trouble in getting it from between his incisors. When at last it does come out, it is mangled, distorted, and extinct.

Calvin. M. Melancthon! you have taken a very perverse view of the subject. Such language as yours would extinguish that zeal which is to enlighten the nations, and to consume the tares by which they are overrun.

Melancthon. The tares and the corn are so intermingled throughout the wide plain which our God hath given us to cultivate, that I would rather turn the patient and humble into it to weed it carefully, than a thresher who would thresh wheat and tare together before the grain is ripened, or who would carry fire into the furrows when it is.

Calvin. Yet even the most gentle, and of the gentler sex, are inflamed with a holy zeal in the propagation of the faith.

Melancthon. I do not censure them for their earnestness in maintaining truth. We not only owe our birth to them, but also the better part of our education; and if we were not divided after their first lesson, we should continue to live in a widening circle of brothers and sisters all

our lives. After our infancy and removal from home, the use of the rod is the principal thing we learn of our alien preceptors; and, catching their dictatorial language, we soon begin to exercise their instrument of enforcing it, and swing it right and left, even after we are paralysed by age, and until Death's hand strikes it out of ours. I am sorry you have cited the gentler part of the creation to appear before you, obliged as I am to bear witness that I myself have known a few specimens of the fair sex become a shade less fair, among the perplexities of religion. Indeed I am credibly informed that certain of them have lost their patience, running up and down in the dust where many roads diverge. This surely is not walking humbly with their God, nor walking with him at all; for those who walk with him are always readier to hear *his* voice than their own, and to admit that it is more persuasive. But at last the zealot is so infatuated, by the serious mockeries he imitates and repeats, that he really takes his own voice for God's. Is it not wonderful that the words of eternal life should have hitherto produced only eternal litigation; and that, in our progress heavenward, we should think it expedient to plant unthrifty thorns over bitter wells of blood in the wilderness we leave behind us?

Calvin. It appears to me that you are inclined to tolerate even the rank idolatry of our persecutors. Shame! shame!

Melancthon. Greater shame if I tolerated it within my own dark heart, and waved before it the foul incense of self-love.

Calvin. I do not understand you. What I do understand is this, and deny it at your peril . . I

mean at the peril of your salvation . . that God is a jealous God : he himself declares it.

Melancthon. We are in the habit of considering the God of Nature as a jealous God, and idolatry as an enormous evil ; an evil which is about to come back into the world, and to subdue or seduce once more our strongest and most sublime affections. Why do you lift up your eyes and hands ?

Calvin. An evil *about* to come back ! *about* to come ! Do we not find it in high places ?

Melancthon. We do indeed, and always shall, while there are any high places upon earth. Thither will men creep, and there fall prostrate.

Calvin. Against idolatry we still implore the Almighty that he will incline our hearts to keep his law.

Melancthon. The Jewish law ; the Jewish idolatry. You fear the approach of this, and do not suspect the presence of a worse.

Calvin. A worse than that which the living God hath denounced ?

Melancthon. Even so.

Calvin. Would it not offend, would it not wound to the quick, a mere human creature, to be likened to a piece of metal or stone, a calf or monkey ?

Melancthon. A mere human creature might be angry ; because his influence among his neighbours arises in great measure from the light in which he appears to them ; and this light does not emanate from himself, but may be thrown on him by any hand that is expert at mischief : beside, the likeness of such animals to him could never be suggested by reverence or esteem, nor be regarded as a type of any virtue. The mere

human creature, such as human creatures for the most part are, would be angry; because he has nothing which he can oppose to ridicule but resentment.

Calvin. I am in consternation at your lukewarmness. If you treat idolaters thus lightly, what hope can I entertain of discussing with you the doctrine of grace and predestination.

Melancthon. Entertain no such hope at all. Wherever I find in the Holy Scriptures a disputable doctrine, I interpret it as judges do, in favour of the culprit: such is man: the benevolent judge is God. But in regard to idolatry, I see more criminals who are guilty of it than you do. I go beyond the stone-quarry and the pasture, beyond the graven image and the ox-stall. If we bow before the distant image of good, while there exists within our reach one solitary object of substantial sorrow, which sorrow our efforts can remove, we are guilty (I pronounce it) of idolatry: we prefer the intangible effigy to the living form. Surely we neglect the service of our Maker if we neglect his children. He left us in the chamber with them, to take care of them, to feed them, to admonish them, and occasionally to amuse them: instead of which, after a warning not to run into the fire, we slam the door behind us in their faces, and run eagerly downstairs to dispute and quarrel with our fellows of the household who are about their business. The wickedness of idolatry does not consist in any inadequate representation of the Deity, for whether our hands or our hearts represent him, the representation is almost alike inadequate. Every man does what he hopes and believes will be most pleasing to his God; and

God, in his wisdom and mercy, will not punish gratitude in its error.

Calvin. How do you know that ?

Melancthon. Because I know his loving-kindness, and experience it daily.

Calvin. If men blindly and wilfully run into error when God hath shown the right way, he will visit it on their souls.

Melancthon. He will observe from the serenity of heaven, a serenity emanating from his presence, that there is scarcely any work of his creation on earth which hath not excited in some people or other a remembrance, an admiration, a symbol, of his power. The evil of idolatry is this. Rival nations have raised up rival deities : war hath been denounced in the name of Heaven : men have been murdered for the love of God : and such impiety hath darkened all the regions of the world, that the Lord of all things hath been invoked by all simultaneously as the Lord of Hosts. This is the only invocation in which men of every creed are united : an invocation to which Satan, bent on the perdition of the human race, might have listened from the fallen angels.

Calvin. We cannot hope to purify men's hearts until we lead them away from the abomination of Babylon : nor will they be led away from it until we reduce the images to dust. So long as they stand, the eye will hanker after them, and the spirit be corrupt.

Melancthon. And long afterward, I sadly fear.

We attribute to the weakest of men the appellations and powers of Deity : we fall down before them : we call the impious and cruel by the title of *gracious* and *most religious* : and, even in the

house of God himself, and before his very altar, we split his Divine Majesty asunder, and offer the largest part to the most corrupt and most corrupting of his creatures.

Calvin. Not *we*, M. Melancthon. I will preach, I will exist, in no land of such abomination.

Melancthon. So far, well: but religion demands more. Our reformers knock off the head from Jupiter: thunderbolt and sceptre stand. The attractive, the impressive, the august, they would annihilate, leaving men nothing but their sordid fears of vindictive punishment, and their impious doubts of our Saviour's promises.

Calvin. We should teach men to retain for ever the fear of God before their eyes, never to cease from the apprehension of his wrath, to be well aware that he often afflicts when he is farthest from wrath, and that such infliction is a benefit bestowed by him.

Melancthon. What! if only a few are to be saved when the infliction is over?

Calvin. It becometh not us to repine at the number of vessels which the supremely wise artificer forms, breaks, and casts away, or at the paucity it pleaseth him to preserve. The ways of Providence are inscrutable.

Melancthon. Some of them are, and some of them are not; and in these it seems to be his design that we should see and adore his wisdom. We fancy that all our inflictions are sent us directly and immediately from above: sometimes we think it in piety and contrition, but oftener in moroseness and discontent. It would, however, be well if we attempted to trace the causes of them. We should probably find their origin in some region of the heart which we never had well

explored, or in which we had secretly deposited our worst indulgences. The clouds that intercept the heavens from us, come not from the heavens, but from the earth.

Why should we scribble our own devices over the Book of God, erasing the plainest words, and rendering the Holy Scriptures a worthless palimpsest? Cannot we agree to show the nations of the world that the whole of Christianity is practicable, although the better parts never have been practised, no, not even by the priesthood, in any single one of them. Bishops, confessors, saints, martyrs, have never denounced to king or people, nor ever have attempted to delay or mitigate, the most accursed of crimes, the crime of Cain, the crime indeed whereof Cain's was only a germ, the crime of fratricide, war, war, devastating, depopulating, soul-slaughtering, heaven-defying war. Alas! the gentle call of mercy sounds feebly, and soon dies away, leaving no trace on the memory: but the swelling cries of vengeance, in which we believe we imitate the voice of Heaven, run and reverberate in loud peals and multiplied echoes along the whole vault of the brain. All the man is shaken by them; and he shakes all the earth.

Calvin! I beseech you, do you who guide and govern so many, do you (whatever others may) spare your brethren. Doubtful as I am of lighter texts, blown backward and forward at the opening of opposite windows, I am convinced and certain of one grand immovable verity. It sounds strange; it sounds contradictory.

Calvin. I am curious to hear it.

Melancthon. You shall. This is the tenet. There is nothing on earth divine beside humanity.

ROGER ASCHAM AND LADY JANE GREY

Ascham. Thou art going, my dear young lady, into a most awful state; thou art passing into matrimony and great wealth. God hath willed it: submit in thankfulness.

Thy affections are rightly placed and well distributed. Love is a secondary passion in those who love most, a primary in those who love least. He who is inspired by it in a high degree, is inspired by honour in a higher: it never reaches its plenitude of growth and perfection but in the most exalted minds. Alas! alas!

Jane. What aileth my virtuous Ascham? what is amiss? why do I tremble?

Ascham. I remember a sort of prophecy, made three years ago: it is a prophecy of thy condition and of my feelings on it. Recollectest thou who wrote, sitting upon the sea-beach the evening after an excursion to the Isle of Wight, these verses?

> Invisibly bright water! so like air,
> On looking down I feared thou couldst not bear
> My little bark, of all light barks most light,
> And look'd again, and drew me from the sight,
> And, hanging back, breath'd each fresh gale aghast,
> And held the bench, not to go on so fast.

Jane. I was very childish when I composed them; and, if I had thought any more about the matter, I should have hoped you had been too generous to keep them in your memory as witnesses against me.

Ascham. Nay, they are not much amiss for so young a girl, and there being so few of them, I did not reprove thee. Half an hour, I thought, might have been spent more unprofitably; and I now shall believe it firmly, if thou wilt but be led by them to meditate a little on the similarity of situation in which thou then wert to what thou art now in.

Jane. I will do it, and whatever else you command; for I am weak by nature and very timorous, unless where a strong sense of duty holdeth and supporteth me. There God acteth, and not his creature.

Those were with me at sea who would have been attentive to me if I had seemed to be afraid, even though worshipful men and women were in the company; so that something more powerful threw my fear overboard. Yet I never will go again upon the water.

Ascham. Exercise that beauteous couple, that mind and body, much and variously, but at home, at home, Jane! indoors, and about things indoors; for God is there too. We have rocks and quicksands on the banks of our Thames, O lady, such as Ocean never heard of; and many (who knows how soon!) may be engulfed in the current under their garden-walls.

Jane. Thoroughly do I now understand you. Yes indeed, I have read evil things of courts; but I think nobody can go out bad who entereth good, if timely and true warning shall have been given.

Ascham. I see perils on perils which thou dost not see, albeit thou art wiser than thy poor old master. And it is not because Love hath blinded thee, for that surpasseth his supposed omni-

potence; but it is because thy tender heart, having always leant affectionately upon good, hath felt and known nothing of evil.

I once persuaded thee to reflect much: let me now persuade thee to avoid the habitude of reflection, to lay aside books, and to gaze carefully and stedfastly on what is under and before thee.

Jane. I have well bethought me of my duties: O how extensive they are! what a goodly and fair inheritance! But tell me, would you command me never more to read Cicero and Epictetus and Plutarch and Polybius? The others I do resign: they are good for the arbour and for the gravel-walk: yet leave unto me, I beseech you, my friend and father, leave unto me for my fireside and for my pillow, truth, eloquence, courage, constancy.

Ascham. Read them on thy marriage-bed, on thy child-bed, on thy death-bed. Thou spotless undrooping lily, they have fenced thee right well. These are the men for men: these are to fashion the bright and blessed creatures whom God one day shall smile upon in thy chaste bosom. Mind thou thy husband.

Jane. I sincerely love the youth who hath espoused me; I love him with the fondest, the most solicitous affection; I pray to the Almighty for his goodness and happiness, and do forget at times, unworthy supplicant! the prayers I should have offered for myself. Never fear that I will disparage my kind religious teacher, by disobedience to my husband in the most trying duties.

Ascham. Gentle is he, gentle and virtuous: but time will harden him: time must harden

even thee, sweet Jane! Do thou, complacently and indirectly, lead him from ambition.

Jane. He is contented with me and with home.

Ascham. Ah Jane! Jane! men of high estate grow tired of contentedness.

Jane. He told me he never liked books unless I read them to him: I will read them to him every evening: I will open new worlds to him richer than those discovered by the Spaniard: I will conduct him to treasures, O what treasures! on which he may sleep in innocence and peace.

Ascham. Rather do thou walk with him, ride with him, play with him, be his faery, his page, his everything that love and poetry have invented; but watch him well; sport with his fancies; turn them about like the ringlets round his cheek; and if ever he meditate on power, go toss up thy baby to his brow, and bring back his thoughts into his heart by the music of thy discourse.

Teach him to live unto God and unto thee; and he will discover that women, like the plants in woods, derive their softness and tenderness from the shade.

MARY AND BOTHWELL

Mary. Bothwell! Bothwell! what would you have? I can hardly believe my senses. It was wrong, it was very wrong indeed, to commit such an outrage. You forget my condition, my station, and what you owe me . . the allegiance, the duty . .

Bothwell. Nay, nay, my gracious queen! I thought of nothing else all our ride. What a

sweet fresh colour it has given my royal mistress! O! could the ugly Elizabeth but see it! I should hail you queen of England the next hour.

Mary. How dare you call my cousin ugly? and to my face! And do you think she would give the crown of England to look at me? O you silly man! But what can you mean?

Bothwell. I mean, she would burst and crack at it, like a dry and gnarly log of mountain-ash on a Christmas hearth.

Mary. At me! at my colour! I cannot help laughing at your absurdity, most wicked, flattering, deceiving creature!

Bothwell. I flatter! I deceive! I never try to do what I am likely to fail in: here I must: here all must.

Mary. I wish you had indeed failed altogether.

Bothwell. So then, my royal dove! I did not quite?

Mary. Impudent man! go away.

Ah Bothwell! you are now a traitor after this. They would treat you like one. The laws call it abduction . . and God knows what beside.

Bothwell Treat me like a traitor! me! the truest man among them. Yea, if I would let them, and this fair hand could sign it.

Mary. O heaven! Do not talk so; you make me very sad. I will never be so cruel to you as you have been to me.

Bothwell. The laws too; the laws forsooth! Neither in our country, nor in any other, do the laws touch anything higher than the collar of the most diminutive thief: and a lawyer is always at hand to change his coat and character with him for a groat.

Mary. With what derision and scorn you speak of laws and lawyers! You little know how vindictive they are.

Bothwell. Faith! we are not well acquainted; but I know enough of them to know that.

Mary. Are not you afraid?

Bothwell. I tremble in the presence of majesty and beauty. Where they are, there lies my law. I do confess I am afraid, and hugely; for I feel hard knockings (there must surely be all the Pandects) where my heart was lately.

Mary. You never had any heart, or you would not have treated me in this manner.

Bothwell. You shall want nothing with me: you shall never pine after the past.

Mary. Ah but! ah but! indeed, indeed, good Bothwell! he was very handsome; and you must acknowledge it . . if he had only been less cross and jealous and wayward and childish . .

Bothwell. Too childish by half for you, fair lady! and he was all those other little things beside.

Mary. What is over is over! God forgive you, bad man! Sinner! serpent! it was all you. And you dare smile! Shame upon you, varlet! Yes; now you look as you should do. Nobody ought to be more contrite. You may speak again, if you will only speak to the purpose. Come; no wicked thoughts! I mean if you will speak reasonably. But you really are a very, very wicked man indeed.

Bothwell. Happy the man who hears those blessed words! they grow but on soft sweet lips, fresh pouting from ardent pressure.

Mary. If you presume to talk so, I will kill myself. Are you not ashamed?

Bothwell. My blushes quite consume me : I feel my hair crackle on my head : my beard would burn my fingers.

Mary. I will not laugh, sirrah !

Bothwell. No, my most gracious lady ! in mercy stop half-way ! that smile is quite sufficient.

Mary. Do you fancy I am capable of smiling ? I am quite serious. You have carried me away, and now you have nothing to do but to take me back again.

Bothwell. It would be dangerous : you have too many enemies.

Mary. I do not mind them while you are with me. Am I wild ? You have frightened me so I scarcely know what I say.

Bothwell. A part of your understanding, most gracious lady ! seems at last to have fallen on me.

Mary. Whither now would you carry me ? You know it is quite against my will : absolute downright force.

Bothwell. Pardon, sweet lady ! pardon my excess of zeal and devotion, my unutterable . .

Mary. What ?

Bothwell. Love.

Mary. A subject's is loyalty. Love indeed !

Bothwell. Let me perish, but not against an iceberg.

Mary. Ah, bold cruel man ! this is scoffing. Does it end *so* !

Bothwell. Nay, never let it end *so* ; never let it end at all ; let one thing under heaven be eternal.

Mary. As if I, so helpless a creature, could order it.

Bothwell. What have the Powers above denied you ?

Mary. Happiness, innocence, peace. No, they did not deny them. Bothwell! Bothwell! they were mine; were they not?

Bothwell. And good things they are, no doubt; but there are other good things beside; all which you possess, and these too. These should not always be shut up in the casket. Where there are peace and happiness, there is sure to be innocence; for what else can any one wish? but those who can bring them into the hearts of others, and will not, I never will call innocent. I do not remember that any living person has entreated me and met with a refusal.

Mary. Ah! such men may be beloved, but cannot love. What is that to me? It is unbecoming in me to reason with a profligate, or to listen any longer. You have often run then into such courses?

Bothwell. Alas! from my youth upward I have always been liable to these paroxysms.

Mary. For shame! I do not understand a single word of what you are saying. Again I ask you, and I insist upon an answer, whither are you conducting me?

Bothwell. To freedom, to safety, to the protection of a dutiful subject, to the burning heart of a gallant man.

Mary. I am frightened out of my senses at the mere mention of any such things. What can you possibly mean? I never knew the like. I will not hear of it, you rebel! And you dare already . .

Bothwell. Do you look so sternly on me, when you yourself have reduced me to this extremity? And now, worse! worse! do you deprive me of

the last breath, by turning away from me those eyes, the bright unerring stars of my destiny ?

Mary. If they had any power (but they have none !) I would strike you almost dead with them for that audacity ? Again ? O madman ! madman ! madman !

Bothwell. To mistake the lips for the hand ! hallucination !

Mary. Now if you should (and you must !) be overtaken !

Bothwell. You would deliver me up to death and ignominy ?

Mary. Our pure religion teaches us forgiveness.

Bothwell.

> Then by my troth is it pure and bright
> As a pewter plate on a Saturday night.

Here is a stave of my own to its honour and glory.

Mary. You sing too ?

Bothwell. Yes ; but I am no tenor.

Mary (*aside*). Ah ! sweet soul ! thou[1] wert gentle, fond, and faithful !

Bothwell (*catching the last word*). Capital for the faithful : and moreover it is the cleverest and rarest religion in the world. Few, even of the adventurously pious, so far interfere with the attributes of the Almighty as to take pardon into their own hands . . unless for offences against others. There indeed they find as little difficulty in practising as in preaching.

Mary. I am quite edified at seeing you grow so serious. I once heard that you had abandoned the religion of your ancestors.

Bothwell. I did not abandon it ; it dropped off

[1] Thinking of Rizzio.

me unaware. Now to prove my constancy, I never would take another. It is hard that a man like me should be accused of irreligion. They may do anything with me they like, if they will only let me be quiet. I am long-suffering: I never preach again.

Mary. Well; at least you have not fallen into heresy? you are not malignant?

Bothwell. By Jupiter! no; neither the one nor the other. Sweet gracious lady! how could you suspect me?

Mary. Because you men are so violent and so fond of change. You will never hear reason; you will never do your duty.

Bothwell. By the stars above! I will do mine before I ever presume to pray again.

Mary. And so, you dare to swear and laugh in my presence! I do really think, Bothwell, you are one of the most impudent men I ever met withal.

Bothwell. Ah, my beloved lady!

Mary. Stop, stop! I shall not let you say that.

Bothwell. My most gracious queen and mistress!

Mary. You are now, I believe, within the rules and regulations . . that is, if you would not look up to me in such a very odd way. Modest men always look down on the eyelashes, not between them.

Bothwell. Happy the modest men, if they do.

Mary. There! now you look exactly as you should always.

Bothwell. Faint as I am and sinking betwixt fear and love, I feel that, by thus taking my hand, your Highness in part forgives and entirely pities the most unfortunate of your servants. For surely he is the most unfortunate, who, having ventured the most to serve you, has given you thereby the

most offence. I do not say I hazarded my freedom; it was lost when I first beheld you: I do not say I hazarded my life; I had none until to-day; and who dares touch it on the altar where I devote it? Lady! vouchsafe to hear me!

Mary. What a rough hand you have, Bothwell! what a heavy one! and (holy Virgin!) what a vastly broad one; it would cover I don't know what! and what a briary bower of hair overarching it! Curious! it is quite red all over; everywhere but where there is this long scar; and these two ugly warts. Do I hurt you?

Bothwell. My heart and every fibre feel it, but can well bear it.

Mary. How much whiter the back of the hand is, for a moment, by just passing two fingers over it! look! But really warts are frightful things; and scars not much better. And yet there are silly girls who, when they have nothing else to think about, could kiss them.

Bothwell. Ay, ay; but be girls as silly as they will, I never let them play such idle tricks with me.

Mary. I am glad to hear it: I fancied you had said something very different: you must not joke; it vexes me.

Bothwell. The warts will vanish under the royal touch. As for the scar, I would not lose the scar for the crown of Scotland, in defence whereof I fairly won it.

Mary. O! you are a very brave man, but a very bold one.

Bothwell. Illiterate and ignorant as I am, I would gladly learn from the best-informed and most intellectual of God's creatures, where lies the difference.

Mary. I don't know, I don't know; I am quite bewildered. Move your hand off my knee. Do not lay your cheek there, sir!

O Bothwell! I am tired to death. Take me back! O take me back! pray do! if you have any pity.

Bothwell. Would your Highness be pleased to repose awhile, and remain by yourself in a chamber upstairs?

Mary. I think it might do me good.

Bothwell. May I order the trustiest of the handmaidens to attend your Highness?

Mary. You may. Go, go; I thought I desired you before not to look up at me in that manner. Thank you, gentle Bothwell! I did not speak too harshly, did I? If I did, you may kiss my hand.

Bothwell. If this scar and these warts (which are fast disappearing, I perceive) are become less frightful to your Highness, might the humblest of your servitors crave permission to conduct your Highness nigh unto the chamber-door?

Mary. Ah me! where are my own women? where are my ushers?

Bothwell. Your Highness, in all your wrongs and straits, has the appointment of one supernumerary.

Mary. Be it so: I cannot help myself, as you know; and the blame is all yours.

Bothwell. When your Highness is ready to receive the services of the handmaiden, how may it please your Highness that she shall know it?

Mary. Let her tap twice with her knuckles: I can open the door myself . . or she may.

Bothwell. My queen's most gracious commands shall be duly executed.

LEONORA DI ESTE AND FATHER PANIGAROLA

Leonora. You have then seen him, father? Have you been able, you who console so many, you who console even me, to comfort poor Torquato?

Panigarola. Madonna! the ears of the unhappy man are quickened by his solitude and his sorrow. He seemed aware, or suspicious at least, that somebody was listening at his prison-door; and the cell is so narrow that every sound in it is audible to those who stand outside.

Leonora. He might have whispered.

Panigarola. It would have been most imprudent.

Leonora. Said he nothing? not a word? . . to prove . . to prove that he had not lost his memory; his memory? of what? of reading his verses to me, and of my listening to them. Lucrezia listened to them as attentively as I did, until she observed his waiting for my applause first. When she applauded, he bowed so gracefully: when I applauded, he only held down his head. I was not angry at the difference. But tell me, good father! tell me, pray, whether he gave no sign of sorrow at hearing how soon I am to leave the world. Did you forget to mention it? or did you fear to pain him?

Panigarola. I mentioned it plainly, fully.

Leonora. And was he, was gentle Torquato, very sorry?

Panigarola. Be less anxious. He bore it like a Christian. He said deliberately, but he trembled and sighed, as Christians should sigh and tremble,

that, although he grieved at your illness, yet that to write either in verse or prose, on such a visitation of Providence, was repugnant to his nature.[1]

Leonora. *He* said so? could *he* say it? But I thought you told me he feared a listener. Perhaps too he feared to awaken in me the sentiments he once excited. However it may be, already I feel the chilliness of the grave: his words breathe it over me. I would have entreated him to forget me; but to be forgotten before I had entreated it! . . O father, father!

Panigarola. Human vanity still is lingering on the precincts of the tomb. Is it criminal, is it censurable in him, to anticipate your wishes?

Leonora. Knowing the certainty and the nearness of my departure, he might at least have told me through you that he lamented to lose me.

Panigarola. Is there no voice within your heart that clearly tells you so?

Leonora. That voice is too indistinct, too troubled with the throbbings round about it. We women want sometimes to hear what we know; we die unless we hear what we doubt.

Panigarola. Madonna! this is too passionate for the hour. But the tears you are shedding are a proof of your compunction. May the Virgin, and the Saints around her throne, accept and ratify it.

[1] Mr. Milman, in his *Life of Tasso*, misinterprets the expression. *Genio* and *ingenio* do not always signify *genius*. His words are *a certain secret repugnance of his genius*, but Tasso meant *temper* or *disposition*. *Ingenium* has the same meaning in Latin. Milton was not thinking about his genius when he wrote

Caeteraque *ingenio* non subeunda meo.

Leonora. Father! what were you saying? What were you asking me? Whether no voice whispered to me, assured me? I know not. I am weary of thinking. He must love me. It is not in the nature of such men ever to cease from loving. Was genius ever ungrateful? Mere talents are dry leaves, tost up and down by gusts of passion, and scattered and swept away; but Genius lies on the bosom of Memory, and Gratitude at her feet.

Panigarola. Be composed, be calm, be resigned to the will of Heaven, be ready for that journey's end where the happier who have gone before, and the enduring who soon must follow, will meet.

Leonora. I am prepared to depart; for I have struggled (God knows) to surmount what is insurmountable; and the wings of Angels will sustain and raise me, seeing my descent toward earth too rapid, too unresisted, and too prone. Pray, father, for my deliverance: pray also for poor Torquato's: do not separate us in your prayers. O! could he leave his prison as surely and as speedily as I shall mine! it would not be more thankfully. O! that bars of iron were as fragile as bars of clay! O! that princes were as merciful as Death! But tell him, tell Torquato . . . go again; entreat, persuade, command him, to forget me.

Panigarola. Alas! even the command, even the command from you and from above, might not avail perhaps. You smile, Madonna!

Leonora. I die happy.

ESSEX AND SPENSER

Essex. Instantly on hearing of thy arrival from Ireland, I sent a message to thee, good Edmund, that I might learn from one so judicious and dispassionate as thou art, the real state of things in that distracted country; it having pleased the queen's majesty to think of appointing me her deputy, in order to bring the rebellious to submission.

Spenser. Wisely and well considered; but more worthily of her judgment than her affection. May your lordship overcome, as you have ever done, the difficulties and dangers you foresee.

Essex. We grow weak by striking at random; and knowing that I must strike, and strike heavily, I would fain see exactly where the stroke shall fall.

Some attribute to the Irish all sorts of excesses; others tell us that these are old stories; that there is not a more inoffensive race of merry creatures under heaven, and that their crimes are all hatched for them here in England, by the incubation of printers' boys, and are brought to market at times of distressing dearth in news. From all that I myself have seen of them, I can only say that the civilised (I mean the richer and titled) are as susceptible of heat as iron, and as impenetrable to light as granite. The half-barbarous are probably worse; the utterly barbarous may be somewhat better. Like game-cocks, they must spur when they meet. One fights because he fights an Englishman; another because the fellow he quarrels with comes from a distant county; a

third because the next parish is an eyesore to him, and his fist-mate is from it. The only thing in which they all agree as proper law is the tooth-for-tooth act. Luckily we have a bishop who is a native, and we called him before the queen. He represented to her majesty, that everything in Old Ireland tended to reproduce its kind; crimes among others; and he declared frankly, that if an honest man is murdered, or what is dearer to an honest man, if his honour is wounded in the person of his wife, it must be expected that he will retaliate. Her majesty delivered it as her opinion, that the latter case of vindictiveness was more likely to take effect than the former. But the bishop replied, that in his conscience he could not answer for either if the man was up. The dean of the same diocese gave us a more favourable report. Being a justice of the peace, he averred most solemnly that no man ever had complained to him of murder, excepting one who had lost so many fore-teeth by a cudgel that his deposition could not be taken exactly; added to which, his head was a little clouded with drunkenness; furthermore, that extremely few women had adduced sufficiently clear proofs of violence, excepting those who were wilful, and resisted with tooth and nail. In all which cases it was difficult, nay impossible, to ascertain which violence began first and lasted longest.

There is not a nation upon earth that pretends to be so superlatively generous and high-minded; and there is not one (I speak from experience) so utterly base and venal. I have positive proof that the nobility, in a mass, are agreed to sell, for a stipulated sum, all their rights and privileges, so

much per man; and the queen is inclined thereunto. But would our parliament consent to pay money for a cargo of rotten pilchards? And would not our captains be readier to swamp than to import them? The noisiest rogues in that kingdom, if not quieted by a halter, may be quieted by making them brief-collectors, and by allowing them first to encourage the incendiary, then to denounce and hang him, and lastly to collect all the money they can, running up and down with the whining ferocity of half-starved hyænas, under pretence of repairing the damages their exhausted country hath sustained. Others ask modestly a few thousands a year, and no more, from those whom they represent to us as naked and famished; and prove clearly to every dispassionate man who hath a single drop of free blood in his veins, that at least this pittance is due to them for abandoning their liberal and lucrative professions, and for endangering their valuable lives on the tempestuous seas, in order that the voice of Truth may sound for once upon the shores of England, and Humanity cast her shadow on the council-chamber.

I gave a dinner to a party of these fellows a few weeks ago. I know not how many kings and princes were among them, nor how many poets and prophets and legislators and sages. When they were half-drunk, they coaxed and threatened; when they had gone somewhat deeper, they joked, and croaked, and hiccupped, and wept over sweet Ireland; and when they could neither stand nor sit any longer, they fell upon their knees and their noddles, and swore that limbs, life, liberty, Ireland, and God himself, were all at the queen's service.

It was only their holy religion, the religion of their forefathers . . . here sobs interrupted some, howls others, execrations more, and the liquor they had ingulfed the rest. I looked down on them with stupor and astonishment, seeing faces, forms, dresses, much like ours, and recollecting their ignorance, levity, and ferocity. My pages drew them gently by the heels down the steps ; my grooms set them upright (inasmuch as might be) on their horses ; and the people in the streets, shouting and pelting, sent forward the beasts to their straw.

Various plans have been laid before us for civilising or coercing them. Among the pacific, it was proposed to make an offer to five hundred of the richer Jews in the Hanse-towns and in Poland, who should be raised to the dignity of the Irish peerage, and endowed with four thousand acres of good forfeited land, on condition of each paying two thousand pounds, and of keeping up ten horsemen and twenty foot, Germans or Poles, in readiness for service.

The Catholics bear nowhere such ill-will toward Jews as toward Protestants. Brooks make even worse neighbours than oceans do.

I myself saw no objection to the measure : but our gracious queen declared she had an insuperable one ; *they stank!* We all acknowledged the strength of the argument, and took out our handkerchiefs. Lord Burleigh almost fainted ; and Raleigh wondered how the Emperor Titus could bring up his men against Jerusalem.

'Ah!' said he, looking reverentially at her majesty, 'the star of Berenice shone above him! and what evil influence could that star not quell! what malignancy could it not annihilate!'

Hereupon he touched the earth with his brow until the queen said,

'Sir Walter! lift me up those laurels.'

At which manifestation of princely good-will he was advancing to kiss her majesty's hand, but she waved it, and said sharply,

'Stand there, dog!'

Now what tale have you for us?

Spenser. Interrogate me, my lord, that I may answer each question distinctly, my mind being in sad confusion at what I have seen and undergone.

Essex. Give me thy account and opinion of these very affairs as thou leftest them; for I would rather know one part well, than all imperfectly; and the violences of which I have heard within the day surpass belief.

Why weepest thou, my gentle Spenser? Have the rebels sacked thy house?

Spenser. They have plundered and utterly destroyed it.

Essex. I grieve for thee, and will see thee righted.

Spenser. In this they have little harmed me.

Essex. How! I have heard it reported that thy grounds are fertile, and thy mansion large and pleasant.

Spenser. If river and lake and meadow-ground and mountain could render any place the abode of pleasantness, pleasant was mine, indeed!

On the lovely banks of Mulla I found deep contentment. Under the dark alders did I muse and meditate. Innocent hopes were my gravest cares, and my playfullest fancy was with kindly wishes. Ah! surely of all cruelties the worst is to extinguish our kindness. Mine is gone: I love the

people and the land no longer. My lord, ask me not about them; I may speak injuriously.

Essex. Think rather then of thy happier hours and busier occupations; these likewise may instruct me.

Spenser. The first seeds I sowed in the garden, ere the old castle was made habitable for my lovely bride, were acorns from Penshurst. I planted a little oak before my mansion at the birth of each child. My sons, I said to myself, shall often play in the shade of them when I am gone, and every year shall they take the measure of their growth, as fondly as I take theirs.

Essex. Well, well; but let not this thought make thee weep so bitterly.

Spenser. Poison may ooze from beautiful plants; deadly grief from dearest reminiscences. I *must* grieve, I *must* weep: it seems the law of God, and the only one that men are not disposed to contravene. In the performance of this alone do they effectually aid one another.

Essex. Spenser! I wish I had at hand any arguments or persuasions, of force sufficient to remove thy sorrow: but really I am not in the habit of seeing men grieve at anything, except the loss of favour at court, or of a hawk, or of a buck-hound. And were I to swear out my condolences to a man of thy discernment, in the same round roll-call phrases we employ with one another upon these occasions, I should be guilty, not of insincerity but of insolence. True grief hath ever something sacred in it; and when it visiteth a wise man and a brave one, is most holy.

Nay, kiss not my hand: he whom God smiteth hath God with him. In his presence what am I?

Spenser. Never so great, my lord, as at this hour, when you see aright who is greater. May he guide your counsels, and preserve your life and glory!

Essex. Where are thy friends? Are they with thee?

Spenser. Ah, where, indeed! Generous, true-hearted Philip! where art thou! whose presence was unto me peace and safety; whose smile was contentment, and whose praise renown. My lord! I cannot but think of him among still heavier losses: he was my earliest friend, and would have taught me wisdom.

Essex. Pastoral poetry, my dear Spenser, doth not require tears and lamentations. Dry thine eyes; rebuild thine house: the queen and council, I venture to promise thee, will make ample amends for every evil thou hast sustained. What! does that enforce thee to wail yet louder?

Spenser. Pardon me, bear with me, most noble heart! I have lost what no council, no queen, no Essex, can restore.

Essex. We will see that. There are other swords, and other arms to wield them, beside a Leicester's and a Raleigh's. Others can crush their enemies and serve their friends.

Spenser. O my sweet child! And of many so powerful, many so wise and so beneficent, was there none to save thee? None! none!

Essex. I now perceive that thou lamentest what almost every father is destined to lament. Happiness must be bought, although the payment may be delayed. Consider; the same calamity might have befallen thee here in London. Neither the houses of ambassadors, nor the palaces of

kings, nor the altars of God himself, are asylums against death. How do I know but under this very roof there may sleep some latent calamity, that in an instant shall cover with gloom every inmate of the house, and every far dependant?

Spenser. God avert it!

Essex. Every day, every hour of the year, do hundreds mourn what thou mournest.

Spenser. Oh, no, no, no! Calamities there are around us; calamities there are all over the earth; calamities there are in all seasons; but none in any season, none in any place, like mine.

Essex. So say all fathers, so say all husbands. Look at any old mansion-house, and let the sun shine as gloriously as it may on the golden vanes, or the arms recently quartered over the gateway, or the embayed window, and on the happy pair that haply is toying at it; nevertheless, thou mayest say that of a certainty the same fabric hath seen much sorrow within its chambers, and heard many wailings: and each time this was the heaviest stroke of all. Funerals have passed along through the stout-hearted knights upon the wainscot, and amid the laughing nymphs upon the arras. Old servants have shaken their heads, as if somebody had deceived them, when they found that beauty and nobility could perish.

Edmund! the things that are too true pass by us as if they were not true at all; and when they have singled us out, then only do they strike us. Thou and I must go too. Perhaps the next year may blow us away with its fallen leaves.

Spenser. For you, my lord, many years (I trust) are waiting: I never shall see those fallen leaves.

No leaf, no bud, will spring upon the earth before I sink into her breast for ever.

Essex. Thou, who art wiser than most men, shouldst bear with patience, equanimity, and courage, what is common to all.

Spenser. Enough! enough! enough! Have all men seen their infant burned to ashes before their eyes?

Essex. Gracious God! Merciful Father! what is this?

Spenser. Burned alive! burned to ashes! burned to ashes! The flames dart their serpent tongues through the nursery-window. I cannot quit thee, my Elizabeth! I cannot lay down our Edmund. Oh these flames! they persecute, they enthrall me, they curl round my temples, they hiss upon my brain, they taunt me with their fierce foul voices, they carp at me, they wither me, they consume me, throwing back to me a little of life, to roll and suffer in, with their fangs upon me. Ask me, my lord, the things you wish to know from me; I may answer them; I am now composed again. Command me, my gracious lord! I would yet serve you; soon I shall be unable. You have stooped to raise me up; you have borne with me; you have pitied me, even like one not powerful; you have brought comfort, and will leave it with me; for gratitude is comfort.

Oh! my memory stands all a tip-toe on one burning point: when it drops from it, then it perishes. Spare me: ask me nothing; let me weep before you in peace; the kindest act of greatness.

Essex. I should rather have dared to mount into the midst of the conflagration than I now

dare intreat thee not to weep. The tears that overflow thy heart, my Spenser, will staunch and heal it in their sacred stream, but not without hope in God.

Spenser. My hope in God is that I may soon see again what he has taken from me. Amid the myriads of angels there is not one so beautiful: and even he (if there be any) who is appointed my guardian, could never love me so. Ah! these are idle thoughts, vain wanderings, distempered dreams. If there ever were guardian angels, he who so wanted one, my helpless boy, would not have left these arms upon my knees.

Essex. God help and sustain thee, too gentle Spenser! I never will desert thee. But what am I? Great they have called me! Alas, how powerless then and infantile is greatness in the presence of calámity!

Come, give me thy hand: let us walk up and down the gallery. Bravely done! I will envy no more a Sidney or a Raleigh.

LORD BACON AND RICHARD HOOKER

Bacon. Hearing much of your worthiness and wisdom, Master Richard Hooker, I have besought your comfort and consolation in this my too heavy affliction: for we often do stand in need of hearing what we know full well, and our own balsams must be poured into our breasts by another's hand. As the air at our doors is sometimes more expeditious in removing pain and

heaviness from the body than the most far-fetched remedies would be, so the voice alone of a neighbourly and friendly visitant may be more effectual in assuaging our sorrows, than whatever is most forcible in rhetoric and most recondite in wisdom. On these occasions we cannot put ourselves in a posture to receive the latter, and still less are we at leisure to look into the corners of our store-room, and to uncurl the leaves of our references. As for Memory, who, you may tell me, would save us the trouble, she is footsore enough in all conscience with me, without going further back. Withdrawn as you live from court and courtly men, and having ears occupied by better reports than such as are flying about me, yet haply so hard a case as mine, befalling a man heretofore not averse from the studies in which you take delight, may have touched you with some concern.

Hooker. I do think, my Lord of Verulam, that, unhappy as you appear, God in sooth has foregone to chasten you, and that the day which in his wisdom he appointed for your trial, was the very day on which the King's Majesty gave unto your ward and custody the great seal of his English realm. And yet perhaps it may be, let me utter it without offence, that your features and stature were from that day forward no longer what they were before. Such an effect do power and rank and office produce even on prudent and religious men.

A hound's whelp howleth if you pluck him up above where he stood: man, in much greater peril from falling, doth rejoice. You, my Lord, as befitteth you, are smitten and contrite, and do

appear in deep wretchedness and tribulation to your servants and those about you; but I know that there is always a balm which lies uppermost in these afflictions, and that no heart rightly softened can be very sore.

Bacon. And yet, Master Richard, it is surely no small matter to lose the respect of those who looked up to us for countenance; and the favour of a right learned king; and O Master Hooker! such a power of money! But money is mere dross. I should always hold it so, if it possessed not two qualities; that of making men treat us reverently, and that of enabling us to help the needy.

Hooker. The respect, I think, of those who respect us for what a fool can give and a rogue can take away, may easily be dispensed with; but it is indeed a high prerogative to help the needy; and when it pleases the Almighty to deprive us of it, let us believe that he foreknoweth our inclination to negligence in the charge entrusted to us, and that in his mercy he hath removed from us a most fearful responsibility.

Bacon. I know a number of poor gentlemen to whom I could have rendered aid.

Hooker. Have you examined and sifted their worthiness?

Bacon. Well and deeply.

Hooker. Then must you have known them long before your adversity, and while the means of succouring them were in your hands.

Bacon. You have circumvented and entrapped me, Master Hooker. Faith! I am mortified: you the schoolman, I the schoolboy!

Hooker. Say not so, my Lord. Your years indeed are fewer than mine, by seven or there-

about, but your knowledge is far higher, your experience richer. Our wits are not always in blossom upon us. When the roses are overcharged and languid, up springs a spike of rue. Mortified on such an occasion! God forefend it!! But again to the business . . I should never be over-penitent for my neglect of needy gentlemen who have neglected themselves much worse. They have chosen their profession with its chances and contingencies. If they had protected their country by their courage or adorned it by their studies, they would have merited, and, under a king of such learning and such equity, would have received in some sort their reward. I look upon them as so many old cabinets of ivory and tortoise-shell, scratched, flawed, splintered, rotten, defective both within and without, hard to unlock, insecure to lock up again, unfit to use.

Bacon. Methinks it beginneth to rain, Master Richard. What if we comfort our bodies with a small cup of wine, against the ill-temper of the air. Wherefore, in God's name, are you affrightened?

Hooker. Not so, my Lord; not so.

Bacon. What then affects you?

Hooker. Why, indeed, since your Lordship interrogates me . . I looked, idly and imprudently, into that rich buffet; and I saw, unless the haze of the weather has come into the parlour, or my sight is the worse for last night's reading, no fewer than six silver pints. Surely six tables for company are laid only at coronations.

Bacon. There are many men so squeamish that forsooth they would keep a cup to themselves, and never communicate it to their nearest and best friend; a fashion which seems to me offensive in

an honest house, where no disease of ill repute ought to be feared. We have lately, Master Richard, adopted strange fashions; we have run into the wildest luxuries. The Lord Leicester, I heard it from my father . . God forefend it should ever be recorded in our history . . when he entertained Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle, laid before her Majesty a fork of pure silver. I the more easily credit it, as Master Thomas Coriatt doth vouch for having seen the same monstrous sign of voluptuousness at Venice. We are surely the especial favourites of Providence, when such wantonness hath not melted us quite away. After this portent, it would otherwise have appeared incredible that we should have broken the Spanish Armada.

Pledge me: hither comes our wine.

[*To the Servant.*

Dolt! villain! is not this the beverage I reserve for myself?

The blockhead must imagine that Malmsey runs in a stream under the ocean, like the Alpheus. Bear with me, good Master Hooker, but verily I have little of this wine, and I keep it as a medicine for my many and growing infirmities. You are healthy at present: God in his infinite mercy long maintain you so! Weaker drink is more wholesome for you. The lighter ones of France are best accommodated by Nature to our constitutions, and therefore she has placed them so within our reach, that we have only to stretch out our necks, in a manner, and drink them from the vat. But this Malmsey, this Malmsey, flies from centre to circumference, and makes youthful blood boil.

Hooker. Of a truth, my knowledge in such

matters is but spare. My Lord of Canterbury once ordered part of a goblet, containing some strong Spanish wine, to be taken to me from his table, when I dined by sufferance with his chaplains, and, although a most discreet prudent man, as befitteth his high station, was not so chary of my health as your Lordship. Wine is little to be trifled with, physic less. The Cretans, the brewers of this Malvasy, have many aromatic and powerful herbs among them. On their mountains, and notably on Ida, grows that dittany which works such marvels, and which perhaps may give activity to this hot medicinal drink of theirs. I would not touch it, knowingly: an unregarded leaf, dropped into it above the ordinary, might add such puissance to the concoction, as almost to break the buckles in my shoes: since we have good and valid authority, that the wounded hart, on eating thereof, casts the arrow out of his haunch or entrails, although it stuck a palm deep.

Bacon. When I read of such things I doubt them. Religion and politics belong to God and to God's vicegerent the King: we must not touch upon them unadvisedly: but if I could procure a plant of dittany on easy terms, I would persuade my apothecary and my gamekeeper to make some experiments.

Hooker. I dare not distrust what grave writers have declared, in matters beyond my knowledge.

Bacon. Good Master Hooker, I have read many of your reasonings; and they are admirably well sustained: added to which, your genius has given such a strong current to your language as can come only from a mighty elevation and a most abundant plenteousness. Yet forgive me, in God's

name, my worthy Master, if you descried in me some expression of wonder at your simplicity. We are all weak and vulnerable somewhere: common men in the higher parts; heroes, as was feigned of Achilles, in the lower. You would define to a hair's breadth, the qualities, states, and dependencies, of Principalities, Dominations, and Powers; you would be unerring about the Apostles and the Churches; and 'tis marvellous how you wander about a potherb.

Hooker. I know my poor weak intellects, most noble Lord, and how scantily they have profited by my hard painstaking. Comprehending few things, and those imperfectly, I say only what others have said before, wise men and holy; and if, by passing through my heart into the wide world around me, it pleaseth God that this little treasure shall have lost nothing of its weight and pureness, my exultation is then the exultation of humility. Wisdom consisteth not in knowing many things, nor even in knowing them thoroughly; but in choosing and in following what conduces the most certainly to our lasting happiness and true glory. And this wisdom, my Lord of Verulam, cometh from above.

Bacon. I have observed among the well-informed and the ill-informed nearly the same quantity of infirmities and follies: those who are rather the wiser keep them separate, and those who are wisest of all keep them better out of sight. Now examine the sayings and writings of the prime philosophers; and you will often find them, Master Richard, to be untruths made to resemble truths. The business with them is to approximate as nearly as possible, and not to touch it: the goal of the

charioteer is *evitata fervidis rotis*, as some poet saith. But we who care nothing for chants and cadences, and have no time to catch at applauses, push forward over stones and sands straightway to our object. I have persuaded men, and shall persuade them for ages, that I possess a wide range of thought unexplored by others, and first thrown open by me, with many fair inclosures of choice and abstruse knowledge. I have incited and instructed them to examine all subjects of useful and rational inquiry: few that occurred to me have I myself left untouched or untried: one however hath almost escaped me, and surely one worth the trouble.

Hooker. Pray, my Lord, if I am guilty of no indiscretion, what may it be?

Bacon. Francis Bacon.

OLIVER CROMWELL AND WALTER NOBLE

Cromwell. What brings thee back from Stafford shire, friend Walter?

Noble. I hope, General Cromwell, to persuade you that the death of Charles will be considered by all Europe as a most atrocious action.

Cromwell. Thou hast already persuaded me: what then?

Noble. Surely then you will prevent it, for your authority is great. Even those who upon their consciences found him guilty, would remit the penalty of blood, some from policy, some from mercy. I have conversed with Hutchinson, with

Ludlow, your friend and mine, with Henry Nevile, and Walter Long: you will oblige these worthy friends, and unite in your favour the suffrages of the truest and trustiest men living. There are many others, with whom I am in no habits of intercourse, who are known to entertain the same sentiments; and these also are among the country gentlemen, to whom our parliament owes the better part of its reputation.

Cromwell. You country gentlemen bring with you into the People's House a freshness and sweet savour, which our citizens lack mightily. I would fain merit your esteem, heedless of those pursy fellows from hulks and warehouses, with one ear lappeted by the pen behind it, and the other an heirloom, as Charles would have had it, in Laud's star-chamber. Oh! they are proud and bloody men. My heart melts; but, alas! my authority is null: I am the servant of the Commonwealth: I will not, dare not, betray it. If Charles Stuart had threatened my death only, in the letter we ripped out of the saddle, I would have reproved him manfully and turned him adrift: but others are concerned, lives more precious than mine, worn as it is with fastings, prayers, long services, and preyed upon by a pouncing disease. The Lord hath led him into the toils laid for the innocent. Foolish man! he never could eschew evil counsel.

Noble. In comparison with you, he is but as a pinnacle to a buttress. I acknowledge his weaknesses, and cannot wink upon his crimes: but that which you visit as the heaviest of them, perhaps was not so, although the most disastrous to both parties; the bearing of arms against his people. He fought for what he considered his

hereditary property: we do the same: should we be hanged for losing a lawsuit?

Cromwell. No, unless it is the second. Thou talkest finely and foolishly, Wat, for a man of thy calm discernment. If a rogue holds a pistol to my breast, do I ask him who he is? do I care whether his doublet be of catskin or of dogskin? Fie upon such wicked sophisms! Marvellous, how the devil works upon good men's minds. Friend! friend! hast thou lost thy recollection? On the third of June, 1628, an usher stood at the door of our Commons-house, to hinder any member from leaving it, under pain of being sent to the Tower. On the fifth of the same month, the Speaker said he had received the King's order to interrupt any who should utter a word against his ministers. In the following year we might have justly hanged him for the crime of forgery, seeing that on the twenty-first of January he commanded his printer, Norton, to falsify the text of his own *Declaration*, in which he had acknowledged our rights, and had been paid handsomely for the acknowledgment. I sorely fear the month of January is marked in the Calendar by the finger of the Almighty, for the heavy chastisement of this misdeed. We must take heed unto our ways, and never again be led into the wicked temptation of trusting the false and reprobate. Equity might demand from the traitor more than his worthless and pernicious life. Equity might retaliate on him what Eliot and other most innocent and most virtuous men have suffered; pestilential imprisonment, lingering, painful, incurable disease, fetters and thumb-screws, racks and mutilations. Should the guilt-

less have suffered these things rather than the guilty? the defender of his home and property rather than the robber who broke into them? If the extinction of a spark prevents worse things than the conflagration of twenty cities, if it prevents the expansion of principles endemically noxious through incalculable ages, such as slavish endurance and all unmanly propensities, I would never take by the collar him who resolutely setteth his foot thereon. Whether a grain of dust be blown away in the morning, in the noon, or in the evening, what matter? But it imports very seriously whether it be blown in the eyes and darken the sight of a nation. This is the difference between him who dies in the solitude of his chamber, and him whom halberts, by God's ordinance, may surround upon the scaffold.

Noble. From so cruel an infliction let me hope our unfortunate king may be exempted. He was always more to be dreaded by his friends than by his enemies, and now by neither.

Cromwell. God forbid that Englishman should be feared by Englishman! but to be daunted by the weakest, to bend before the worst . . . I tell thee, Walter Noble, if Moses and the prophets commanded me to this villany, I would draw back and mount my horse.

Noble. I wish that our history, already too dark with blood, should contain, as far as we are concerned in it, some unpolluted pages.

Cromwell. 'Twere better, much better. Never shall I be called, I promise thee, an unnecessary shedder of blood. Remember, my good prudent friend, of what materials our sectaries are composed: what hostility against all eminence, what

rancour against all glory. Not only kingly power offends them, but every other; and they talk of *putting to the sword*, as if it were the quietest, gentlest, and most ordinary thing in the world. The knaves even dictate from their stools and benches to men in armour, bruised and bleeding for them; and with schooldames' scourges in their fists do they give counsel to those who protect them from the cart and halter. In the name of the Lord, I must spit outright (or worse) upon these crackling bouncing firebrands, before I can make them tractable.

Noble. I lament their blindness; but follies wear out the faster by being hard run upon. This fermenting sourness will presently turn vapid, and people will cast it out. I am not surprised that you are discontented and angry at what thwarts your better nature. But come, Cromwell, overlook them, despise them, and erect to yourself a glorious name by sparing a mortal enemy.

Cromwell. A glorious name, by God's blessing, I will erect, and all our fellow-labourers shall rejoice at it: but I see better than they do the blow descending on them, and my arm better than theirs can ward it off. Noble, thy heart overflows with kindness for Charles Stuart: if he were at liberty to-morrow by thy intercession, he would sign thy death-warrant the day after, for serving the Commonwealth. A generation of vipers! there is nothing upright or grateful in them: never was there a drop of even Scotch blood in their veins. Indeed we have a clue to their bedchamber still hanging on the door, and I suspect that an Italian fiddler or French valet has more than once crossed the current.

Noble. That may be: nor indeed is it credible that any royal or courtly family has gone on for three generations without a spur from interloper. Look at France! some stout Parisian saint performed the last miracle there.[1]

Cromwell. Now thou talkest gravely and sensibly: I could hear thee discourse thus for hours together.

Noble. Hear me, Cromwell, with equal patience on matters more important. We all have our sufferings; why increase one another's wantonly? Be the blood Scotch or English, French or Italian, a drummer's or a buffoon's, it carries a soul upon its stream, and every soul has many places to touch at, and much business to perform, before it reaches its ultimate destination. Abolish the power of Charles; extinguish not his virtues. Whatever is worthy to be loved for anything is worthy to be preserved. A wise and dispassionate legislator, if any such should arise among men, will not condemn to death him who has done, or is likely to do, more service than injury to society. Blocks and gibbets are the nearest objects to ours, and their business is never with virtues or with hopes. Justice upon earth has forgotten half her lesson, and repeats the other half badly. God commanded her to reward and to punish. She would tell you that punishment is the reward of the wicked, and that the rewards of the good belong to him, whose delight is their distribution in another place. She is neither blind, as some have

[1] The birth of Louis XIV is somewhat like a miracle to true believers, while among sceptics the principal doubt is not whether the child was supposititious, but whether he was so after his birth or before.

represented her, nor clear-sighted: she is one-eyed, and looks fixedly and fondly with her one eye upon edge-tools and halters. The best actions are never recompensed, and the worst are seldom chastised. The virtuous man passes by without a *good morrow* from us, and the malefactor may walk at large where he will, provided he walk far enough from encroachment on our passions and their playthings. Let us, Cromwell, in God's name, turn the laws to their right intention: let us render it the interest of all to love them and keep them holy. They are at present, both in form and essence, the greatest curse that society labours under; the scorn of the wicked, the consternation of the good, the refuge of those who violate, and the ruin of those who appeal to them.

Cromwell. You have paid, I see, chancery fees, Walter.

Noble. I should then have paid not only what is exorbitant, but what is altogether undue. Paying a lawyer, in any court, we pay over again what we have paid before. If government has neglected to provide that our duties be taught us, and our lives, properties, and station in society, be secured, what right has it to one farthing from us? for what else have our forefathers and ourselves been taxed? for what else are magistrates of any kind appointed? There is an awfulness in symmetry which chastens even the wildest, and there is a terror in distortion at which they strike and fly. It is thus in regard to law. We should be slow in the censure of princes, and slower in the chastisement. Kingship is a profession which has produced few among the most illustrious, many among the most despicable, of the human

race. As in our days they are educated and treated, he is deserving of no slight commendation who rises in moral worth to the level of his lowest subject; so manifold and so great are the impediments.

Reverting to the peculiar case of Charles, in my opinion you are ill justified by morality or policy in punishing him capitally. The representatives of the people ought to superintend the education of their princes; where they have omitted it, the mischief and the responsibility rest with them. As kings are the administrators of the commonwealth, they must submit their whole household to the national inspection: on which principle, the preceptors of their children should be appointed by parliament; and the pupils, until they have attained their majority, should be examined twice annually on the extent and on the direction of their studies, in the presence of seven men at least, chosen out of the Commons-house by ballot. Nothing of the kind having been done, and the principles of this unfortunate king having been distorted by a wrong education, and retained in their obliquity by evil counsellors, I would now, on the reclamation both of generosity and of justice, try clemency. If it fails, his adherents will be confounded at his perfidy, and, expecting a like return for their services, will abandon him.

Cromwell. Whatever his education was, thinkest thou he was not wise enough to know his wickedness, his usurpation and tyranny, when he resolved to rule without a parliament? to levy taxes, to force consciences, to imprison, to slay, at his own arbitrament and pleasure? Some time before the

most violent of his outrages, had he not received a grant of money from us on conditions which he violated? He then seized forcibly what belonged to the public: and, because we remonstrated against this fraud and theft, did he not prosecute us as rebels? Whereas, when a king acts against the laws or without them, there can be but one rebel in the kingdom. Accomplices there may be; and such we may treat with mildness, if they do not wring and wrest it away from us and turn it against us, pushing down those who raised them. When the leading stag of such a herd is intractably wild, and obstinately vicious to his keepers, he ought to be hamstrung and thrown across the paling, wherever he is overtaken. What! pat his hide forsooth! hug his neck, garland his horns, pipe to him, try gentleness, try clemency! Walter, Walter! we laugh at speculators.

Noble. Many indeed are ready enough to laugh at speculators, because many profit, or expect to profit, by established and widening abuses. Speculations toward evil lose their name by adoption: speculations toward good are for ever speculations, and he who hath proposed them is a chimerical and silly creature. Among the matters under this denomination I never find a cruel project, I never find an oppressive or unjust one: how happens it?

Cromwell. Proportions should exist in all things. Sovrans are paid higher than others for their office; they should therefore be punished more severely for abusing it, even if the consequences of this abuse were in nothing more grievous or extensive. We cannot clap them in the stocks

conveniently, nor whip them at the market-place. Where there is a crown there must be an axe: I would keep it there only.

Noble. Lop off the rotten, press out the poisonous, preserve the rest: let it suffice to have given this memorable example of national power and justice.

Cromwell. Justice is perfect; an attribute of God; we must not trifle with it.

Noble. Should we be less merciful to our fellow-creatures than to our domestic animals? Before we deliver them to be killed, we weigh their services against their inconveniences. On the foundation of policy, when we have no better, let us erect the trophies of humanity: let us consider that, educated in the same manner and situated in the same position, we ourselves might have acted as reprovably. Abolish that for ever which must else for ever generate abuses; and attribute the faults of the man to the office, not the faults of the office to the man.

Cromwell. I have no bowels for hypocrisy, and I abominate and detest kingship.

Noble. I abominate and detest hangmanship; but in certain stages of society both are necessary. Let them go together; we want neither now.

Cromwell. Men, like nails, lose their usefulness when they lose their direction and begin to bend: such nails are then thrown into the dust or into the furnace. I must do my duty; I must accomplish what is commanded me; I must not be turned aside. I am loth to be cast into the furnace or the dust: but God's will be done! Prythee, Wat, since thou readest, as I see, the books of philosophers, didst thou ever hear of Digby's remedies by sympathy?

Noble. Yes, formerly.

Cromwell. Well, now, I protest, I do believe there is something in them. To cure my headache, I must breathe a vein in the neck of Charles.

Noble. Oliver, Oliver, others are wittiest over wine, thou over blood; cold-hearted, cruel man.

Cromwell. Why, dost thou verily think me so, Walter? Perhaps thou art right in the main: but he alone who fashioned me in my mother's womb, and who sees things deeper than we do, knows that.

ADMIRAL BLAKE AND HUMPHREY BLAKE

Blake. Humphrey! it hath pleased God, upon this day, to vouchsafe unto the English arms a signal victory. Brother! it grieves my heart that neither of us can rejoice in it as we should do. Evening is closing on the waters: our crews are returning thanks and offering up prayers to the Almighty. Alas! alas! that we, who ought to be the most grateful for his protection, and for the spirit he hath breathed into our people, should be the only men in this vast armament whom he hath sorely chastened! that we of all others should be ashamed to approach the throne of grace among our countrymen and comrades! There are those who accuse you, and they are brave and honest men.. there are those, O Humphrey! Humphrey!.. was the sound ever heard in our father's house?.. who accuse you, brother! brother!.. how can I ever find utterance for the word?.. yea, of cowardice.

Stand off! I want no help: let me be.

Humphrey. To-day, for the first time in my life, I was in the midst of many ships of superior force firing upon mine, at once and incessantly.

Blake. The very position where most intrepidity was required. Were none with you ? were none in the same danger ? Shame ! Shame ! You owed many an example, and you defrauded them of it. They could not gain promotion, the poor seamen ! they could not hope for glory in the wide world : example they might have hoped for. You would not have robbed them of their prize-money . .

Humphrey. Brother ! was ever act of dishonesty imputed to a Blake ?

Blake. . . Until now. You have robbed them even of the chance they had of winning it : you have robbed them of the pride, the just and chastened pride, awaiting them at home : you have robbed their children of their richest inheritance, a father's good repute.

Humphrey. Despite of calumniators, there are worthy men ready to speak in my favour, at least in extenuation . .

Blake. I will hear them, as becomes me, although I myself am cognizant of your default ; for during the conflict how anxiously, as often as I could, did I look toward your frigate ! Especial care could not be fairly taken that aid at the trying moment should be at hand : other vessels were no less exposed than yours ; and it was my duty to avoid all partiality in giving my support.

Humphrey. Grievous as my shortcoming may be, surely I am not precluded from what benefit the testimony of my friends may afford me.

Blake. Friends . . ah thou hast many, Humphrey ! and many hast thou well deserved. In

youth, in boyhood, in childhood, thy honied temper brought ever warm friends about thee. Easiness of disposition conciliates bad and good alike: it draws affections to it, and relaxes enmities: but that same easiness renders us, too often, negligent of our graver duties. God knows, I may without the same excuse (if it is any) be impeached of negligence in many of mine; but never where the honour or safety of my country was concerned. Wherefore the Almighty's hand, in this last battle, as in others no less prosperous, hath conducted and sustained me.

Humphrey! did thy heart wax faint within thee through want of confidence in our sole Deliverer?

Humphrey. Truly I have no such plea.

Blake. It were none; it were an aggravation.

Humphrey. I confess I am quite unable to offer any adequate defence for my backwardness, my misconduct. Oh! could the hour return, the battle rage again. How many things are worse than death! how few things better! I am twelve years younger than you are, brother, and want your experience.

Blake. Is that your only want? Deplorable is it to know, as now I know, that you will never have it, and that you will have a country which you can never serve.

Humphrey. Deplorable it is indeed. God help me!

Blake. Worse evil soon may follow; worse to me, remembering thy childhood. Merciful Father! after all the blood that hath been shed this day, must I devote a brother's?

Humphrey. O Robert! always compassionate, always kind and generous! do not inflict on

yourself so lasting a calamity, so unavailing a regret! Listen! . . not to me . . but listen. I hear under your bow the sound of oars. I hear them drawn into boats: verily do I believe that several of the captains are come to intercede for me, as they said they would do.

Blake. Intercession is vain. Honourable men shall judge you. A man to be honourable must be strictly just, at the least. Will brave men spare you? It lies with them. Whatever be their sentence, my duty is (God give me strength!) to execute it. [*Officers come aboard.*

Gentlemen! who sent for you?

Senior Officer. General! we, the captains of your fleet, come before you upon the most painful of duties.

Blake (*to himself*). I said so: his doom is sealed. (*To Senior Officer*) Speak, sir! speak out, I say. A man who hath fought so bravely as you have fought to-day ought never to hesitate and falter.

Senior Officer. General! we grieve to say that Captain Humphrey Blake, commanding a frigate in the service of the Commonwealth, is accused of remissness in his duty.

Blake. I know it. Where is the accuser? What! no answer from any of you? Then I am he. Captain Humphrey Blake is here impleaded of neglecting to perform his uttermost in the seizure or destruction of the enemy's galloons. Is the crime . . write it, write it down! . . no need to speak it here . . capital? Negligence? no worse? but worse can there be?

Senior Officer. We would humbly represent . .

Blake. Representations, if made at all, must be made elsewhere. He goes forthwith to England.

Return each of you to his vessel. Delinquency, grave delinquency, there hath been, of what nature and to what extent you must decide. Take him away. (*Alone.*) Just God! am I the guilty man, that I should drink to the very dregs such a cup of bitterness?

Forgive, forgive, O Lord! the sinful cry of thy servant! Thy will be done! Thou hast shown thy power this day, O Lord! now show, and make me worthy of, thy mercy!

WALTON, COTTON, AND OLDWAYS

Walton. God be with thee and preserve thee, old Ashbourne! thou art verily the pleasantest place upon his earth, I mean from May-day till Michaelmas. Son Cotton, let us tarry a little here upon the bridge. Did you ever see greener meadows than these on either hand? And what says that fine lofty spire upon the left, a trowling-line's cast from us? It says methinks, 'Blessed be the Lord for this bounty: come hither and repeat it beside me.' How my jade winces! I wish the strawberry-spotted trout, and ash-coloured grayling under us, had the bree that plagues thee so, my merry wench! Look, my son, at the great venerable house opposite. You know these parts as well as I do, or better; are you acquainted with the worthy who lives over there?

Cotton. I cannot say I am.

Walton. You shall be then. He has resided here forty-five years, and knew intimately our good Doctor Donne, and (I hear) hath some of his

verses, written when he was a stripling or little better, the which we come after.

Cotton. That, I imagine, must be he! the man in black, walking above the house.

Walton. Truly said on both counts. Willy Oldways, sure enough; and he doth walk above his house-top. The gardens here, you observe, overhang the streets.

Cotton. Ashbourne, to my mind, is the prettiest town in England.

Walton. And there is nowhere between Trent and Tweed a sweeter stream for the trout, I do assure you, than the one our horses are bestriding. Those in my opinion were very wise men who consecrated certain streams to the Muses: I know not whether I can say so much of those who added the mountains. Whenever I am beside a river or rivulet on a sunny day, and think a little while, and let images warm into life about me, and joyous sounds increase and multiply in their innocence, the sun looks brighter and feels warmer, and I am readier to live, and less unready to die.

Son Cotton! these light idle brooks,
Peeping into so many nooks,
Yet have not for their idlest wave
The leisure you may think they have:
No, not the little ones that run
And hide behind the first big stone,
When they have squirted in the eye
Of their next neighbour passing by;
Nor yonder curly sidcling fellow
Of tones than Pan's own flute more mellow,
Who learns his tune and tries it over
As girl who fain would please her lover.
Something has each of them to say,
He says it and then runs away,

And says it in another place,
Continuing the unthrifty chase.
We have as many tales to tell,
And look as gay and run as well,
But leave another to pursue
What we had promised we would do,
Till in the order God has fated,
One after one precipitated,
Whether we *would* on, or would *not* on,
Just like these idle waves, son Cotton!

And now I have taken you by surprise, I will have (finished or unfinished) the verses you snatched out of my hand, and promised me another time, when you awoke this morning.

Cotton. If you must have them, here they are.

Walton (*reads*).

Rocks under Okeover park-paling
Better than Ashbourne suit the grayling.
Reckless of people springs the trout,
Tossing his vacant head about,
And his distinction-stars, as one
Not to be touched but looked upon,
And smirks askance, as who should say
'I'd lay now (if I e'er *did* lay)
'The brightest fly that shines above,
'You know not what *I'm* thinking of;
'What *you* are, I can plainly tell,
'And so, my gentles, fare ye well!'

Heigh! heigh! what have we here? a double hook with a bait upon each side. Faith! son Cotton, if my friend Oldways had seen these, not the verses I have been reading, but these others I have run over in silence, he would have reproved me, in his mild amicable way, for my friendship with one who, at two-and-twenty, could either know so much or invent so much about a girl. He remarked to me, the last time we met, that our climate was more backward and

our youth more forward than anciently; and, taking out a newspaper from under the cushion of his arm-chair, showed me a paragraph, with a cross in red ink, and seven or eight marks of admiration, some on one side, some on the other, in which there was mention made of a female servant, who, hardly seventeen years old, charged her master's son, who was barely two older . . .

Cotton. Nonsense! nonsense! impossible!

Walton. Why, he himself seemed to express a doubt; for beneath was written, 'Qu: if perjured . . which God forbid! May all turn out to his glory!'

Cotton. But really I do not recollect that paper of mine, if mine it be, which appears to have stuck against the Okeover-paling lines.

Walton. Look! they are both on the same scrap. Truly, son, there are girls here and there who might have said as much as thou, their proctor, hast indited for them: they have such froward tongues in their heads, some of them. A breath keeps them in motion, like a Jew's harp, God knows how long. If you do not or will not recollect the verses on this indorsement, I will read them again, and aloud.

Cotton. Pray do not baulk your fancy.

Walton (*reads*).

> Where 's my apron? I will gather
> Daffodils and kingcups, rather
> Than have fifty silly souls,
> False as cats and dull as owls,
> Looking up into my eyes
> And half-blinding me with sighs.

Cats, forsooth! *Owls*, and cry you mercy! Have they no better words than those for civil

people? Did any young woman really use the expressions, bating the metre, or can you have contrived them out of pure likelihood?

Cotton. I will not gratify your curiosity at present.

Walton. Anon then.

> Here I stretch myself along,
> Tell a tale or sing a song,
> By my cousin Sue or Bet . .
> And for dinner here I get
> Strawberries, curds, or what I please,
> With my bread upon my knees;
> And when I have had enough,
> Shake, and off to *blind man's buff*.

Spoken in the character of a maiden, it seems, who little knows, in her innocence, that *blind man's buff* is a perilous game.

You are looking, I perceive, from off the streamlet toward the church. In its chancel lie the first and last of the Cockaynes. Whole races of men have been exterminated by war and pestilence; families and names have slipped down and lost themselves by slow and imperceptible decay; but I doubt whether any breed of fish, with heron and otter and angler in pursuit of it, hath been extinguished since the Heptarchy. They might humble our pride a whit, methinks, though they hold their tongues. The people here entertain a strange prejudice against the *nine-eyes*.

Cotton. What, in the name of wonder, is that?

Walton. At your years do not you know? It is a tiny kind of lamprey, a finger long; it sticketh to the stones by its sucker, and if you are not warier and more knowing than folks in general from the south, you might take it for a weed; it

wriggles its whole body to and fro so regularly, and is of that dark colour which subaqueous weeds are often of, as though they were wet through, which they are not any more than land-weeds, if one may believe young Doctor Plott, who told me so in confidence.

Hold my mare, son Cotton. I will try whether my whip can reach the window, when I have mounted the bank.

Cotton. Curious! the middle of a street to be lower than the side by several feet. People would not believe it in London or Hull.

Walton. Ho! lass! tell the good parson, your master, or his wife if she be nearer at hand, that two friends would dine with him; Charles Cotton, kinsman of Mistress Cotton of the Peak, and his humble servant Izaac Walton.

Girl. If you are come, gentles, to dine with my master, I will make another kidney-pudding first, while I am about it, and then tell him: not but we have enough and to spare, yet master and mistress love to see plenty, and to welcome with no such peacods as words.

Walton. Go, thou hearty jade, trip it, and tell him.

Cotton. I will answer for it, thy friend is a good soul: I perceive it in the heartiness and alacrity of the wench. She glories in his hospitality, and it renders her labour a delight.

Walton. He wants nothing, yet he keeps the grammar-school, and is ready to receive, as private tutor, any young gentleman in preparation for Oxford or Cambridge; but only one. They live like princes, converse like friends, and part like lovers.

Cotton. Here he comes: I never saw such a profusion of snow-white hair.

Walton. Let us go up and meet him.

Oldways. Welcome, my friends! will you walk back into the house or sit awhile in the shade here?

Walton. We will sit down in the grass, on each side of your arm-chair, good Master William. Why, how is this? here are tulips and other flowers by the thousand growing out of the turf. You are all of a piece, my sunny saint; you are always concealing the best things about you, except your counsel, your raisin-wine, and your money.

Oldways. The garden was once divided by borders: a young gentleman, my private pupil, was fond of leaping: his heels ruined my choicest flowers, ten or twenty at a time. I remonstrated: he patted me on the shoulder, and said, 'My dear Mr. Oldways, in these borders if you miss a flower you are uneasy; now, if the whole garden were in turf, you would be delighted to discover one. Turf it then, and leave the flowers to grow or not to grow, as may happen.' I mentioned it to my wife: 'Suppose we do,' said she. It was done; and the boy's remark, I have found by experience, is true.

Walton. You have some very nice flies about the trees here, friend Oldways. Charles, do prythee lay thy hand upon that green one. He has it! he has it! bravely done, upon my life! I never saw anything achieved so admirably . . not a wing nor an antenna the worse for it. Put him into this box. Thou art caught, but shalt catch others: lie softly.

Cotton. The transport of dad Walton will carry him off (I would lay a wager) from the object of his ride.

Oldways. What was that, sir ?

Cotton. Old Donne, I suspect, is nothing to such a fly.

Walton. All things in their season.

Cotton. Come, I carried the rods in my hand all the way.

Oldways. I never could have believed, Master Izaac, that you would have trusted your tackle out of your own hand.

Walton. Without cogent reason, no indeed : but . . let me whisper.

I told youngster it was because I carried a hunting-whip, and could not hold that and rod too. But why did I carry it, bethink you ?

Oldways. I cannot guess.

Walton. I must come behind your chair and whisper softlier. I have that in my pocket which might make the dogs inquisitive and troublesome . . a rare paste, of my own invention. When son Cotton sees me draw up gill after gill, and he can do nothing, he will respect me : not that I have to complain of him as yet : and he shall know the whole at supper, after the first day's sport.

Cotton. Have you asked ?

Walton. Anon : have patience.

Cotton. Will no reminding do ? Not a rod or line, or fly of any colour, false or true, shall you have, dad Izaac, before you have made to our kind host here your intended application.

Oldways. No ceremony with me, I desire. Speak and have.

Walton. Oldways, I think you were curate to Master Donne ?

Oldways. When I was first in holy orders, and he was ready for another world.

Walton. I have heard it reported that you have some of his earlier poetry.

Oldways. I have (I believe) a trifle or two: but if he were living he would not wish them to see the light.

Walton. Why not? he had nothing to fear: his fame was established; and he was a discreet and holy man.

Oldways. He was almost in his boyhood when he wrote it, being but in his twenty-third year, and subject to fits of love.

Cotton. This passion then cannot have had for its object the daughter of Sir George More, whom he saw not until afterward.

Oldways. No, nor was that worthy lady called Margaret, as was this, who scattered so many pearls in his path, he was wont to say, that he trod uneasily on them and could never skip them.

Walton. Let us look at them in his poetry.

Oldways. I know not whether he would consent thereto, were he living, the lines running so totally on the amorous.

Walton. Faith and troth! we mortals are odd fishes. We care not how many see us in choler, when we rave and bluster and make as much noise and bustle as we can: but if the kindest and most generous affection comes across us, we suppress every sign of it, and hide ourselves in nooks and coverts. Out with the drawer, my dear Oldways; we have seen Donne's sting; in justice to him let us now have a sample of his honey.

Oldways. Strange, that you never asked me before.

Walton. I am fain to write his life, now one can sit by Dove-side and hold the paper upon one's knee, without fear that some unlucky catchpole of a rheumatism tip one upon the shoulder. I have many things to say in Donne's favour: let me add to them, by your assistance, that he not only loved well and truly, as was proved in his marriage, though like a good angler he changed his fly, and did not at all seasons cast his rod over the same water; but that his heart opened early to the genial affections; that his satire was only the overflowing of his wit; that he made it administer to his duties; that he ordered it to officiate as he would his curate, and perform half the service of the church for him.

Cotton. Pray, who was the object of his affections?

Oldways. The damsel was Mistress Margaret Hayes.

Cotton. I am curious to know, if you will indulge my curiosity, what figure of a woman she might be.

Oldways. She was of lofty stature, red-haired (which some folks dislike), but with comely white eyebrows, a very slender transparent nose, and elegantly thin lips, covering with due astringency a treasure of pearls beyond price, which, as her lover would have it, she never ostentatiously displayed. Her chin was somewhat long, with what I should have simply called a sweet dimple in it, quite proportionate; but Donne said it was more than dimple; that it was peculiar; that her angelic face could not have existed without it, nor it without her angelic face; that is, unless by a new dispensation. He was much taken thereby,

and mused upon it deeply ; calling it in moments of joyousness the cradle of all sweet fancies, and in hours of suffering from her sedateness, the vale of death.

Walton. So ingenious are men when the spring torrent of passion shakes up and carries away their thoughts, covering (as it were) the green meadow of still homely life with pebbles and shingle, some colourless and obtuse, some sharp and sparkling.

Cotton. I hope he was happy in her at last.

Oldways. Ha ! ha ! here we have 'em. Strong lines ! Happy, no ; he was not happy. He was forced to renounce her by what he then called his evil destiny ; and wishing, if not to forget her, yet to assuage his grief under the impediments to their union, he made a voyage to Spain and the Azores with the Earl of Essex. When this passion first blazed out he was in his twentieth year ; for the physicians do tell us that where the genius is ardent the passions are precocious. The lady had profited by many more seasons than he had, and carried with her manifestly the fruits of circumspection. No benefice falling unto him, nor indeed there being fit preparation, she submitted to the will of Providence. Howbeit, he could not bring his mind to reason until ten years after, when he married the daughter of the worshipful Sir George More.

Cotton. I do not know whether the arduous step of matrimony, on which many a poor fellow has broken his shin, is a step geometrically calculated for bringing us to Reason : but I have seen Passion run up it in a minute, and down it in half a one.

Oldways. Young gentleman my patron the doctor was none of the light-hearted and oblivious.

Cotton. Truly I should think it a hard matter to forget such a beauty as his muse and his chaplain have described; at least if one had ever stood upon the brink of matrimony with her. It is allowable, I hope, to be curious concerning the termination of so singular an attachment.

Oldways. She would listen to none other.

Cotton. Surely she must have had good ears to have heard one.

Oldways. No pretender had the hardihood to come forward too obtrusively. Donne had the misfortune, as he then thought it, to outlive her, after a courtship of about five years, which enabled him to contemplate her ripening beauties at leisure, and to bend over the opening flowers of her virtues and accomplishments. Alas! they were lost to the world (unless by example) in her forty-seventh spring.

Cotton. He might then leisurely bend over them, and quite as easily shake the seed out as smell them. Did she refuse him then?

Oldways. He dared not ask her.

Cotton. Why, verily, I should have boggled at that said vale (I think) myself.

Oldways. Isaac! our young friend Master Cotton is not sedate enough yet, I suspect, for a right view and perception of poetry. I doubt whether these affecting verses on her loss will move him greatly: somewhat, yes; there is in the beginning so much simplicity, in the middle so much reflection, in the close so much grandeur and sublimity, no scholar can peruse them without strong emotion. Take and read them.

Cotton. Come, come; do not keep them to

yourself, dad! I have the heart of a man, and will bear the recitation as valiantly as may be.

Walton. I will read aloud the best stanza only. What strong language!

> Her one hair would hold a dragon,
> Her one eye would burn an earth:
> Fall, my tears! fill each your flagon!
> Millions fall! A dearth! a dearth!

Cotton. The Doctor must have been desperate about the fair Margaret.

Walton. His verses are fine indeed: one feels for him, poor man!

Cotton. And wishes him nearer to Stourbridge, or some other glass-furnace. He must have been at great charges.

Oldways. Lord help the youth! tell him, Izaak, *that* is poetical, and means nothing.

Walton. He has an inkling of it, I misgive me.

Cotton. How could he write so smoothly in his affliction, when he exhibited nothing of the same knack afterward.

Walton. I don't know; unless it may be that men's verses, like their knees, stiffen by age.

Oldways. I do like vastly your glib verses; but you cannot be at once easy and majestical.

Walton. It is only our noble rivers that enjoy this privilege. The greatest conqueror in the world never had so many triumphal arches erected to him as our middle-sized brooks have.

Oldways. Now, Master Izaak, by your leave, I do think you are wrong in calling them triumphal. The ancients would have it that arches over waters were signs of subjection.

Walton. The ancients may have what they will, excepting your good company for the evening,

which (please God!) we shall keep to ourselves. They were mighty people for subjection and subjugation.

Oldways. Virgil says, 'Pontem indignatus Araxes.'

Walton. Araxes was testy enough under it, I dare to aver. But what have you to say about the matter, son Cotton?

Cotton. I dare not decide either against my father or mine host.

Oldways. So, we are yet no friends.

Cotton. Under favour then, I would say that we but acknowledge the power of rivers and runlets in bridging them; for without so doing we could not pass. We are obliged to offer them a crown or diadem as the price of their acquiescence.

Oldways. Rather do I think that we are feudatory to them much in the same manner as the dukes of Normandy were to the kings of France, pulling them out of their beds, or making them lie narrowly and uneasily therein.

Walton. Is that between thy fingers, Will, another piece of honest old Donne's poetry?

Oldways. Yes; these and one other are the only pieces I have kept: for we often throw away or neglect, in the lifetime of our friends, those things which in some following age are searched after through all the libraries in the world. What I am about to read he composed in the meridian heat of youth and genius.

She was so beautiful, had God but died
For her, and none beside,
Reeling with holy joy from east to west
Earth would have sunk down blest;
And, burning with bright zeal, the buoyant Sun
Cried thro' his worlds *well done!*

He must have had an eye on the Psalmist; for I would not asseverate that he was inspired, Master Walton, in the theological sense of the word; but I do verily believe I discover here a thread of the mantle.

Cotton. And with enough of the nap on it to keep him hot as a muffin when one slips the butter in.

Oldways. True. Nobody would dare to speak thus but from authority. The Greeks and Romans, he remarked, had neat baskets, but scanty simples; and did not press them down so closely as they might have done; and were fonder of nosegays than of sweet-pots. He told me the rose of Paphos was of one species, the rose of Sharon of another. Whereat he burst forth to the purpose,

> Rather give me the lasting rose of Sharon,
> But dip it in the oil that oil'd thy beard, O Aaron!

Nevertheless, I could perceive that he was of so equal a mind that he liked them equally in their due season. These majestical verses . . .

Cotton. I am anxious to hear the last of 'em.

Oldways. No wonder: and I will joyfully gratify so laudable a wish. He wrote this among the earliest:

> Juno was proud, Minerva stern,
> Venus would rather toy than learn.
> What fault is there in Margaret Hayes?
> Her high disdain and pointed stays.

I do not know whether, it being near our dinner-time, I ought to enter so deeply as I could into a criticism on it, which the doctor himself, in a single evening, taught me how to do. Charley is rather of the youngest; but I will be circum-

spect. That Juno was proud may be learned from Virgil. The following passages in him and other Latin poets . . .

Cotton. We will examine them all after dinner, my dear sir.

Oldways. The nights are not mighty long; but we shall find time, I trust.

Minerva stern.

Excuse me a moment: my Homer is in the study, and my memory is less exact than it was formerly.

Cotton. O my good Mr. Oldways! do not, in God's name! let us lose a single moment of your precious company. Doctor Donne could require no support from these heathens, when he had the dean and chapter on his side.

Oldways. A few parallel passages . . One would wish to write as other people have written.

Cotton. We must sleep at Uttoxeter.

Oldways. I hope not.

Walton. We must indeed; and if we once get into your learning, we shall be carried down the stream, without the power even of wishing to mount it.

Oldways. Well, I will draw in then.

Venus would rather toy than learn.

Now, Master Izaak, does that evince a knowledge of the world, a knowledge of men and manners, or not? In our days we have nothing like it: exquisite wisdom! Reason and meditate as you ride along, and inform our young friend here how the beautiful trust in their beauty, and how little they learn from experience, and how they trifle and toy. Certainly the Venus here is Venus

Urania; the doctor would dissertate upon none other; yet even she, being a Venus . . . the sex is the sex . . ay, Izaak!

Her high disdain and pointed stays.

Volumes and volumes are under these words. Briefly, he could find no other faults in his beloved than the defences of her virgin chastity against his marital and portly ardour. What can be more delicately or more learnedly expressed!

Walton. This is the poetry to reason upon from morning to night.

Cotton. By my conscience is it! he wrongs it greatly who ventures to talk a word about it, unless after long reflection, or after the instruction of the profound author.

Oldways. Izaak, thou hast a son worthy of thee, or about to become so . . the son here of thy adoption . . how grave and thoughtful!

Walton. These verses are testimonials of a fine fancy in Donne; and I like the man the better who admits Love into his study late and early: for which two reasons I seized the lines at first with some avidity. On second thoughts, however, I doubt whether I shall insert them in my biography, or indeed hint at the origin of them. In the whole story of his marriage with the daughter of Sir George More there is something so sacredly romantic, so full of that which bursts from the tenderest heart and from the purest, that I would admit no other lightor landscape to the portraiture. For if there is aught, precedent or subsequent, that offends our view of an admirable character, or intercepts or lessens it, we may surely cast it down and suppress it, and neither be called

injudicious nor disingenuous. I think it no more requisite to note every fit of anger or of love, than to chronicle the returns of a hiccup, or the times a man rubs between his fingers a sprig of sweet-briar to extract its smell. Let the character be taken in the complex ; and let the more obvious and best peculiarities be marked plainly and distinctly, or (if those predominate) the worst. These latter I leave to others, of whom the school is full, who like anatomy the better because the subject of their incisions was hanged. When I would sit upon a bank in my angling I look for the even turf, and do not trust myself so willingly to a rotten stump or a sharp one. I am not among those who, speaking ill of the virtuous, say, ' Truth obliges me to confess . . the interests of Learning and of Society demand from me . . .' and such things ; when this Truth of theirs is the elder sister of Malevolence, and teaches her half her tricks ; and when the interests of Learning and of Society may be found in the printer's ledger, under the author's name, by the side of shillings and pennies.

Oldways. Friend Izaak, you are indeed exempt from all suspicion of malignity ; and I never heard you intimate that you carry in your pocket the *letters patent* of Society for the management of her interests in this world below. Verily do I believe that both Society and Learning will pardon you, though you never talk of *pursuing*, or *exposing*, or *laying bare*, or *cutting up* ; or employ any other term in their behalf drawn from the woods and forests, the chase and butchery. Donne fell into unhappiness by aiming at espousals with a person of higher condition than himself.

Walton. His affections happened to alight upon one who was; and in most cases I would recommend it rather than the contrary, for the advantage of the children in their manners and in their professions.

Light and worthless men, I have always observed, choose the society of those who are either much above or much below them; and, like dust and loose feathers, are rarely to be found in their places. Donne was none such: he loved his equals, and would find them where he could: when he could not find them, he could sit alone. This seems an easy matter: and yet, masters, there are more people who could run along a rope from yonder spire to this grass plot, than can do it.

Oldways. Come, gentles: the girl raps at the garden-gate: I hear the ladle against the lock: dinner waits for us.

THE LADY LISLE AND ELIZABETH GAUNT

Lady Lisle. Madam, I am confident you will pardon me; for affliction teaches forgiveness.

Elizabeth Gaunt. From the cell of the condemned we are going, unless my hopes mislead me, where alone we can receive it.

Tell me, I beseech you, lady! in what matter or manner do you think you can have offended a poor sinner such as I am. Surely we come into this dismal place for our offences; and it is not here that any can be given or taken.

Lady Lisle. Just now, when I entered the prison, I saw your countenance serene and cheerful; you looked upon me for a time with an unaltered eye: you turned away from me, as I fancied, only to utter some expressions of devotion; and again you looked upon me; and tears rolled down your face. Alas! that I should, by any circumstance, any action or recollection, make another unhappy. Alas! that I should deepen the gloom in the very shadow of death.

Elizabeth Gaunt. Be comforted: you have not done it. Grief softens and melts and flows away with tears.

I wept because another was greatly more wretched than I myself. I wept at that black attire; at that attire of modesty and of widowhood.

Lady Lisle. It covers a wounded, almost a broken heart: an unworthy offering to our blessed Redeemer.

Elizabeth Gaunt. In his name let us now rejoice! Let us offer our prayers and our thanks at once together! We may yield up our souls perhaps at the same hour.

Lady Lisle. Is mine so pure? Have I bemoaned, as I should have done, the faults I have committed? Have my sighs arisen for the unmerited mercies of my God? and not rather for him, the beloved of my heart, the adviser and sustainer I have lost!

Open, O gates of Death!

Smile on me, approve my last action in this world, O virtuous husband! O saint and martyr! my brave, compassionate, and loving Lisle!

Elizabeth Gaunt. And cannot you too smile,

sweet lady? are not you with him even now? Doth body, doth clay, doth air, separate and estrange free spirits? Bethink you of his gladness, of his glory; and begin to partake them.

O! how could an Englishman, how could twelve, condemn to death, condemn to so great an evil as they thought it and may find it, this innocent and helpless widow!

Lady Lisle. Blame not *that* jury! blame not the jury which brought against me the verdict of guilty. I was so: I received in my house a wanderer who had fought under the rash and giddy Monmouth. He was hungry and thirsty, and I took him in. My Saviour had commanded, my king had forbidden it.

Yet the twelve would not have delivered me over to death, unless the judge had threatened them with an accusation of treason in default of it. Terror made them unanimous: they redeemed their properties and lives at the stated price.

Elizabeth Gaunt. I hope at least the unfortunate man, whom you received in the hour of danger, may avoid his penalty.

Lady Lisle. Let us hope it.

Elizabeth Gaunt. I too am imprisoned for the same offence; and I have little expectation that he who was concealed by me hath any chance of happiness, although he hath escaped. Could I find the means of conveying to him a small pittance, I should leave the world the more comfortably.

Lady Lisle. Trust in God; not in one thing or another, but in all. Resign the care of this wanderer to *his* guidance.

Elizabeth Gaunt. He abandoned that guidance.

Lady Lisle. Unfortunate! how can money then avail him!

Elizabeth Gaunt. It might save him from distress and from despair, from the taunts of the hard-hearted and from the inclemency of the godly.

Lady Lisle. In godliness, O my friend! there cannot be inclemency.

Elizabeth Gaunt. You are thinking of perfection, my dear lady; and I marvel not at it; for what else hath ever occupied your thoughts! But godliness, in almost the best of us, often is austere, often uncompliant and rigid, proner to reprove than to pardon, to drag back or thrust aside than to invite and help onward.

Poor man! I never knew him before: I cannot tell how he shall endure his self-reproach, or whether it will bring him to calmer thoughts hereafter.

Lady Lisle. I am not a busy idler in curiosity; nor, if I were, is there time enough left me for indulging in it; yet gladly would I learn the history of events, at the first appearance so resembling those in mine.

Elizabeth Gaunt. The person's name I never may disclose; which would be the worst thing I could betray of the trust he placed in me. He took refuge in my humble dwelling, imploring me in the name of Christ to harbour him for a season. Food and raiment were afforded him unsparingly; yet his fears made him shiver through them. Whatever I could urge of prayer and exhortation was not wanting: still, although he prayed, he was disquieted. Soon came to my ears the declaration of the king, that his majesty would rather pardon a rebel than the concealer of a rebel. The

hope was a faint one: but it *was* a hope; and I gave it him. His thanksgivings were now more ardent, his prayers more humble, and oftener repeated. They did not strengthen his heart: it was unpurified and unprepared for them. Poor creature! he consented with it to betray me; and I am condemned to be burnt alive. Can we believe, can we encourage the hope, that in his weary way through life he will find those only who will conceal from him the knowledge of this execution? Heavily, too heavily, must it weigh on so irresolute and infirm a breast.

Let it not move you to weeping.

Lady Lisle. It does not: oh! it does not.

Elizabeth Gaunt. What then?

Lady Lisle. Your saintly tenderness, your heavenly tranquillity.

Elizabeth Gaunt. No, no: abstain! abstain! It was I who grieved: it was I who doubted. Let us now be firmer: we have both the same rock to rest upon. See! I shed no tears.

I saved his life, an unprofitable and (I fear) a joyless one: he, by God's grace, has thrown open to me, and at an earlier hour than ever I ventured to expect it, the avenue to eternal bliss.

Lady Lisle. O my good angel! that bestrewest with fresh flowers a path already smooth and pleasant to me, may those timorous men who have betrayed, and those misguided ones who have prosecuted us, be conscious on their death-beds that we have entered it! And they too will at last find rest.

BOSSUET AND THE DUCHESS DE FONTANGES

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, it is the king's desire that I compliment you on the elevation you have attained.

Fontanges. O monseigneur, I know very well what you mean. His Majesty is kind and polite to everybody. The last thing he said to me was, 'Angélique! do not forget to compliment Monseigneur the bishop on the dignity I have conferred upon him, of almoner to the Dauphiness. I desired the appointment for him, only that he might be of rank sufficient to confess you, now you are duchess. Let him be your confessor, my little girl. He has fine manners.'

Bossuet. I dare not presume to ask you, mademoiselle, what was your gracious reply to the condescension of our royal master.

Fontanges. O yes, you may. I told him I was almost sure I should be ashamed of confessing such naughty things to a person of high rank, who writes like an angel.

Bossuet. The observation was inspired, mademoiselle, by your goodness and modesty.

Fontanges. You are so agreeable a man, monseigneur, I will confess to you directly, if you like.

Bossuet. Have you brought yourself to a proper frame of mind, young lady?

Fontanges. What is that?

Bossuet. Do you hate sin?

Fontanges. Very much.

Bossuet. Are you resolved to leave it off ?

Fontanges. I have left it off entirely since the king began to love me. I have never said a spiteful word of anybody since.

Bossuet. In your opinion, mademoiselle, are there no other sins than malice ?

Fontanges. I never stole anything : I never committed adultery : I never coveted my neighbour's wife : I never killed any person : though several have told me they should die for me.

Bossuet. Vain, idle talk ! did you listen to it ?

Fontanges. Indeed I did, with both ears ; it seemed so funny.

Bossuet. You have something to answer for then.

Fontanges. No, indeed I have not, monseigneur. I have asked many times after them, and found they were all alive : which mortified me.

Bossuet. So then ! you would really have them die for you ?

Fontanges. O no, no . . but I wanted to see whether they were in earnest or told me fibs : for if they told me fibs I would never trust them again. I do not care about them ; for the king told me I was only to mind *him.*

Bossuet. Lowest and highest, we all owe to his Majesty our duty and submission.

Fontanges. I am sure he has mine : so you need not blame me or question me on that. At first, indeed, when he entered the folding-doors, I was in such a flurry I could hear my heart beat across the chamber : by degrees I cared little about the matter : and at last, when I grew used to it, I liked it rather than not. Now, if this is not confession, what is ?

Bossuet. We must abstract the soul from every low mundane thought. Do you hate the world, mademoiselle ?

Fontanges. A good deal of it : all Picardy for example, and all Sologne : nothing is uglier . . and, oh my life ! what frightful men and women !

Bossuet. I would say, in plain language, do you hate the flesh and the devil ?

Fontanges. Who does not hate the devil ? If you will hold my hand the while, I will tell him so . . I hate you, beast ! There now. As for flesh, I never could bear a fat man. Such people can neither dance nor hunt, nor do anything that I know of.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle Marie-Angélique de Scoraille de Rousille, Duchesse de Fontanges ! do you hate titles and dignities and yourself ?

Fontanges. Myself ! does any one hate me ? why should I be the first ? Hatred is the worst thing in the world : it makes one so very ugly.

Bossuet. To love God, we must hate ourselves. We must detest our bodies if we would save our souls.

Fontanges. That is hard : how can I do it ? I see nothing so detestable in mine : do you ? To love is easier. I love God whenever I think of him, he has been so very good to me : but I cannot hate myself, if I would. As God hath not hated me, why should I ? Beside, it was he who made the king to love me ; for I heard you say in a sermon that the hearts of kings are in his rule and governance. As for titles and dignities, I do not care much about them while his Majesty loves me, and calls me his Angélique. They make people more civil about us ; and therefore it must

be a simpleton who hates or disregards them, and a hypocrite who pretends it. I am glad to be a duchess. Manon and Lisette have never tied my garter so as to hurt me since, nor has the mischievous old La Grange said anything cross or bold: on the contrary, she told me what a fine colour and what a plumpness it gave me. Would not you be rather a duchess than a waiting-maid or a nun, if the king gave you your choice?

Bossuet. Pardon me, mademoiselle, I am confounded at the levity of your question.

Fontanges. I am in earnest, as you see.

Bossuet. Flattery will come before you in other and more dangerous forms: you will be commended for excellences which do not belong to you: and this you will find as injurious to your repose as to your virtue. An ingenuous mind feels in unmerited praise the bitterest reproof. If you reject it you are unhappy, if you accept it you are undone. The compliments of a king are of themselves sufficient to pervert your intellect.

Fontanges. There you are mistaken twice over. It is not my person that pleases him so greatly; it is my spirit, my wit, my talents, my genius, and that very thing which you have mentioned . . . what was it? my intellect. He never complimented me the least upon my beauty. Others have said that I am the most beautiful young creature under heaven; a blossom of Paradise, a nymph, an angel; worth (let me whisper it in your ear . . do I lean too hard?) a thousand Montespans. But his Majesty never said more on the occasion than that I was *imparagonable*! (what is that?) and that he adored me; holding

my hand and sitting quite still, when he might have romped with me and kissed me.

Bossuet. I would aspire to the glory of converting you.

Fontanges. You may do anything with me but convert me: you must not do that: I am a Catholic born. M. de Turenne and Mademoiselle de Duras were heretics: you did right there. The king told the chancellor that he prepared them, that the business was arranged for you, and that you had nothing to do but to get ready the arguments and responses, which you did gallantly, did not you? And yet Mademoiselle de Duras was very awkward for a long while afterward in crossing herself, and was once remarked to beat her breast in the litany with the points of two fingers at a time, when every one is taught to use only the second, whether it has a ring upon it or not. I am sorry she did so; for people might think her insincere in her conversion, and pretend that she kept a finger for each religion.

Bossuet. It would be as uncharitable to doubt the conviction of Mademoiselle de Duras as that of M. le Maréchal.

Fontanges. I have heard some fine verses, I can assure you, monseigneur, in which you are called the conqueror of Turenne. I should like to have been his conqueror myself, he was so great a man. I understand that you have lately done a much more difficult thing.

Bossuet. To what do you refer, mademoiselle?

Fontanges. That you have overcome quietism. Now, in the name of wonder, how could you manage that?

Bossuet. By the grace of God.

Fontanges. Yes indeed; but never until now did God give any preacher so much of his grace as to subdue this pest.

Bossuet. It has appeared among us but lately.

Fontanges. O dear me! I have always been subject to it dreadfully, from a child.

Bossuet. Really! I never heard so.

Fontanges. I checked myself as well as I could, although they constantly told me I looked well in it.

Bossuet. In what, mademoiselle?

Fontanges. In quietism; that is, when I fell asleep at sermon-time. I am ashamed that such a learned and pious man as M. de Fénelon should incline to it, as they say he does.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, you quite mistake the matter.

Fontanges. Is not then M. de Fénelon thought a very pious and learned person?

Bossuet. And justly.

Fontanges. I have read a great way in a romance he has begun, about a knight-errant in search of a father. The king says there are many such about his court; but I never saw them, nor heard of them before. The marchioness de la Motte, his relative, brought it to me, written out in a charming hand, as much as the copy-book would hold, and I got through I know not how far. If he had gone on with the nymphs in the grotto I never should have been tired of him; but he quite forgot his own story, and left them at once; in a hurry (I suppose) to set out upon his mission to Saintonge in the *pays d'Aunis*, where the king has promised him a famous *heretic-hunt*. He is, I do assure you, a wonderful creature; he under-

stands so much Latin and Greek, and knows all the tricks of the sorceresses. Yet you keep him under.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, if you really have anything to confess, and if you desire that I should have the honour of absolving you, it would be better to proceed in it, than to oppress me with unmerited eulogies on my humble labours.

Fontanges. You must first direct me, monseigneur: I have nothing particular. The king assures me there is no harm whatever in his love toward me.

Bossuet. That depends on your thoughts at the moment. If you abstract the mind from the body, and turn your heart toward heaven . . .

Fontanges. O monseigneur, I always did so . . every time but once . . you quite make me blush. Let us converse about something else, or I shall grow too serious, just as you made me the other day at the funeral sermon. And now let me tell you, my lord, you compose such pretty funeral-sermons, I hope I shall have the pleasure of hearing you preach mine.

Bossuet. Rather let us hope, mademoiselle, that the hour is yet far distant when so melancholy a service will be performed for you. May he who is unborn be the sad announcer of your departure hence! May he indicate to those around him many virtues not perhaps yet full-blown in you, and point triumphantly to many faults and foibles checked by you in their early growth, and lying dead on the open road you shall have left behind you! To me the painful duty will, I trust, be spared: I am advanced in age: you are a child.

Fontanges. O no, I am seventeen.

Bossuet. I should have supposed you younger by two years at least. But do you collect nothing from your own reflection, which raises so many in my breast? You think it possible that I, aged as I am, may preach a sermon on your funeral. Alas, it is so! such things have been! There is, however, no funeral so sad to follow as the funeral of our own youth, which we have been pampering with fond desires, ambitious hopes, and all the bright berries that hang in poisonous clusters over the path of life.

Fontanges. I never minded them; I like peaches better; and one a day is quite enough for me.

Bossuet. We say that our days are few; and, saying it, we say too much. Marie-Angélique, we have but one: the past are not ours, and who can promise us the future? This in which we live is ours only while we live in it; the next moment may strike it off from us; the next sentence I would utter may be broken and fall between us. The beauty that has made a thousand hearts to beat at one instant, at the succeeding has been without pulse and colour, without admirer, friend, companion, follower. She by whose eyes the march of victory shall have been directed, whose name shall have animated armies at the extremities of the earth, drops into one of its crevices and mingles with its dust. Duchess de Fontanges! think on this! Lady! so live as to think on it undisturbed!

Fontanges. O God! I am quite alarmed. Do not talk thus gravely. It is in vain that you speak to me in so sweet a voice. I am frightened even at the rattle of the beads about my neck: take them off, and let us talk on other things.

What was it that dropped on the floor as you were speaking? It seemed to shake the room, though it sounded like a pin or button.

Bossuet. Never mind it: leave it there: I pray you, I implore you, madame!

Fontanges. Why do you rise? why do you run? why not let me? I am nimbler. So, your ring fell from your hand, my lord bishop! How quick you are! Could not you have trusted me to pick it up?

Bossuet. Madame is too condescending: had this happened, I should have been overwhelmed with confusion. My hand is shrivelled; the ring has ceased to fit it. A mere accident may draw us into perdition: a mere accident may bestow on us the means of grace. A pebble has moved you more than my words.

Fontanges. It pleases me vastly: I admire rubies: I will ask the king for one exactly like it. This is the time he usually comes from the chase. I am sorry you cannot be present to hear how prettily I shall ask him: but that is impossible, you know: for I shall do it just when I am certain he would give me anything. He said so himself: he said but yesterday

'Such a sweet creature is worth a world . .'

and no actor on the stage was ever more like a king than his Majesty was when he spoke it, if he had but kept his wig and robe on. And yet you know he is rather stiff and wrinkled for so great a monarch; and his eyes, I am afraid, are beginning to fail him; he looks so close at things.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, such is the duty of a prince who desires to conciliate our regard and love.

Fontanges. Well, I think so too; though I did not like it in him at first. I am sure he will order the ring for me, and I will confess to you with it upon my finger. But first I must be cautious and particular to know of him how much it is his royal will that I should say.

LOUIS XIV AND FATHER LA CHAISE

Louis. Father, there is one thing which I never have confessed; sometimes considering it almost as a light matter, and sometimes seeing it in its true colours. In my wars against the Dutch I committed an action . .

La Chaise. Sire, the ears of the Lord are always open to those who confess their sins to their confessor. Cruelties and many other bad deeds are perpetrated in war, at which we should shudder in our houses at Paris.

Louis. The people who were then in their houses did shudder, poor devils! It was ludicrous to see how such clumsy figures skipped, when the bombs fell among their villages, in which the lower part of the habitations was under water; and children looked from the upper windows, between the legs of calves and lambs, and of the old household dog, struggling to free himself, as less ignorant of his danger. Loud shrieks were sometimes heard, when the artillery and other implements of war were silent: for fevers raged within their insulated walls, and wives execrated their husbands, with whom they had lived in concord and tenderness many years, when the father enforced the necessity of throwing their

dead infant into the lake below. Our young soldiers on such occasions exercised their dexterity, and took their choice; for the whole family was assembled at the casement, and prayers were read over the defunct, accompanied with some firm and with some faltering responses.

By these terrible examples God punished their heresy.

La Chaise. The Lord of Hosts is merciful: he protected your Majesty in the midst of these horrors.

Louis. He sustained my strength, kept up my spirits, and afforded me every day some fresh amusement, in the country of this rebellious and blasphemous people, who regularly, a quarter before twelve o'clock, knowing that mass was then performed among us, sang their psalms.

La Chaise. I cannot blame a certain degree of severity on such occasions: on much slighter, we read in the Old Testament, nations were smitten with the edge of the sword.

Louis. I have wanted to find that place, but my Testament was not an old one: it was printed at the Louvre in my own time. As for the edge of the sword, it was not always convenient to use that; they are stout fellows; but our numbers enabled us to starve them out, and we had more engineers and better. Beside which, I took peculiar vengeance on some of the principal families, and on some among the most learned of their professors: for if any had a dissolute son, who, as dissolute sons usually are, was the darling of the house, I bribed him, made him drunk, and converted him. This occasionally broke the father's heart: God's punishment of stubbornness!

La Chaise. Without the especial grace of the Holy Spirit, such conversions are transitory. It is requisite to secure the soul while we have it, by the exertion of a little loving-kindness. I would deliver the poor stray creatures up to their Maker straightway, lest he should call me to account for their back-sliding. Heresy is a leprosy, which the whiter it is the worse it is. Those who appear the most innocent and godly, are the very men who do the most mischief and hold the fewest observances. They hardly treat God Almighty like a gentleman, grudge him a clean napkin at his own table, and spend less upon him than upon a Christmas dinner.

Louis. O father La Chaise! you have searched my heart: you have brought to light my hidden offences. Nothing is concealed from your penetration. I come forth like a criminal in his chains.

La Chaise. Confess, sire, confess! I will pour the oil into your wounded spirit, taking due care that the vengeance of heaven be satisfied by your atonement.

Louis. Intelligence was brought to me that the cook of the English general had prepared a superb dinner, in consequence of what that insolent and vainglorious people are in the habit of calling a success. 'We shall soon see,' exclaimed I, 'who is successful: God protects France.' The whole army shouted, and, I verily believe, at that moment would have conquered the world. I deferred it: my designs lie in my own breast. Father, I never heard such a shout in my life: it reminded me of Cherubim and Seraphim and Archangels. The infantry cried with joy; the horses capered and neighed and ventriloquized right and left, from an

excess of animation. Leopard-skins, bear-skins, Genoa velvet, Mechlin ruffles, Brussels cravats, feathers and fringes and golden bands, up in the air at once; pawings and snortings, threats and adjurations, beginnings and ends of songs. I was Henry and Caesar, Alexander and David, Charlemagne and Agamemnon: I had only to give the word; they would swim across the Channel, and bring the tyrant of proud Albion back in chains. All my prudence was requisite to repress their ardour.

A letter had been intercepted by my scouts, addressed by the wife of the English general to her husband. She was at Gorcum: she informed him that she would send him a glorious *mincepie*, for his dinner the following day, in celebration of his victory. 'Devil incarnate!' said I on reading the dispatch, 'I will disappoint thy malice.' I was so enraged, that I went within a mile or two of cannon-shot; and I should have gone within half a mile if my dignity had permitted me, or if my resentment had lasted. I liberated the messenger, detaining as hostage his son who accompanied him, and promising that if the *mincepie* was secured, I would make him a chevalier on the spot. Providence favoured our arms: but unfortunately there were among my staff-officers some who had fought under Turenne, and who, I suspect, retained the infection of heresy. They presented the *mincepie* to me on their knees, and I ate. It was Friday. I did not remember the day when I began to eat; but the sharpness of the weather, the odour of the pie, and something of vengeance springing up again at the sight of it, made me continue after I had recollected; and for my greater condemnation, I had inquired that very

morning of what materials it was composed. God set his face against me, and hid from me the light of his countenance. I lost victory after victory; nobody knows how; for my generals were better than the enemy's, my soldiers more numerous, more brave, more disciplined. And, extraordinary and awful! even those who swore to conquer or die, ran back again like whelps, crying, 'It is the first duty of a soldier to see his king in safety.' I never heard so many fine sentiments, or fewer songs. My stomach was out of order by the visitation of the Lord. I took the sacrament on the Sunday.

La Chaise. The sacrament on a Friday's *gras*! I should have recommended first a *de profundis*, a *miserere*, and an *eructavit cor meum*, and lastly a little oil of ricina, which, administered by the holy and taken by the faithful, is almost as efficacious in its way as that of Rheims. Penance is to be done: your Majesty must fast: your Majesty must wear sackcloth next your skin, and carry ashes upon your head before the people.

Louis. Father, I cannot consent to this humiliation: the people must fear me. What are you doing with those scissors and that pill? I am sound; give it Villeroy or Richelieu.

La Chaise. Sire, no impiety, no levity, I pray. In this pill, as your Majesty calls it, are some flakes of ashes from the incense, which seldom is pure gum; break it between your fingers, and scatter it upon your peruke: well done. Now take this.

Louis. Faith! I have no sore on groin or limb. A black plaster! what is that for?

La Chaise. This is sackcloth. It was the sack

in which Madame de Maintenon put her knitting, until the pins frayed it.

Louis. I should have believed that sackcloth means . .

La Chaise. No interpretations of scripture, I charge you from authority, Sire. Put it on your back or bosom.

Louis. God forgive me, sinner ! It has dropped down into my pantaloon : will that do ?

La Chaise. Did it, in descending, touch your back, belly, ribs, breast, or shoulder, or any part that needs mortification, and can be mortified without scandal ?

Louis. I placed it between my frills.

La Chaise. In such manner as to touch the skin sensibly ?

Louis. It tickled me, by stirring a hair or two.

La Chaise. Be comforted then : for people have been tickled to death.

Louis. But, father, you remit the standing in presence of the people ?

La Chaise. Indeed I do not. Stand at the window, son of St. Louis.

Louis. And perform the same ceremonies ? no, upon my conscience ! My almoner . .

La Chaise. They are performed.

Louis. But the people will never know what is on my head or in my pantaloon.

La Chaise. Penance is performed so far : to-morrow is Friday : one more rigid must be enforced. Six dishes alone shall come upon the table ; and, although fasting does not extend to wines or *liqueurs*, I order that three kinds only of wine be presented, and three of *liqueur*.

Louis. In the six dishes is soup included ?

La Chaise. Soup is not served in a dish; but I forbid more than three kinds of soup.

Louis. Oysters of Cancale?

La Chaise. Those come in barrels: take care they be not dished. Your Majesty must either eat them raw from the barrel, or dressed in scallop, or both; but beware, I say again, of dishing this article, as your soul shall answer for it at the last day. There are those who would prohibit them wholly. I have experienced . . I mean in others . . strange uncouth effects therefrom, which, unless they shadow forth something mystical, it were better not to provoke.

Louis. Pray, father, why is that frightful day which you mentioned just now, and which I think I have heard mentioned on other occasions, called the last? when the last in this life is over before it comes, and when the first in the next is not begun.

La Chaise. It is called the last day by the Church, because after that day the Church can do nothing for the sinner. Her saints, martyrs, and confessors, can plead at the bar for him the whole of that day until sunset, some say until after *angelus*; then the books are closed, the candles put out, the doors shut, and the key turned. The flames of purgatory then sink into the floor, and would not wither a cistus-leaf full-blown and shed: there is nothing left but heaven and hell, songs and lamentations.

Louis. Permit me to ask another question of no less importance, and connected with my penance. The Bishop of Aix in Provence has sent me thirty fine quails.

La Chaise. There are naturalists who assert that quails have fallen from heaven, like manna. Ex-

ternally they bear the appearance of birds, and I have eaten them in that persuasion. If however any one from grave authority is convinced of the contrary, or propends to believe so, and eats thereof, the fault is venial. I conferred with Tamburini on this momentous point. He distinguishes between quails taken in the field or in the air as they descend, and tame quails bred within coops and enclosures, which are begotten in the ordinary way of generation, and of which the substance in that case must be different. I cannot believe that the Bishop of Aix would be the conservator of creatures so given to fighting and wantonness; but rather opine that his quails alighted somewhere in his diocese, and perhaps as a mark of divine favour to so worthy a member of the Church. It is safer to eat them after twelve o'clock at night; but where there is purity and humility of spirit, I see not that they are greatly to be dreaded.

PETER THE GREAT AND ALEXIS

Peter. And so, after flying from thy father's house, thou hast returned again from Vienna. After this affront in the face of Europe, thou darest to appear before me?

Alexis. My emperor and father! I am brought before your majesty, not at my own desire.

Peter. I believe it well.

Alexis. I would not anger you.

Peter. What hope hadst thou, rebel, in thy flight to Vienna?

Alexis. The hope of peace and privacy; the

hope of security; and above all things, of never more offending you.

Peter. That hope thou hast accomplished.

Thou imaginedst then that my brother of Austria would maintain thee at his court . . speak!

Alexis. No, sir! I imagined that he would have afforded me a place of refuge.

Peter. Didst thou then take money with thee?

Alexis. A few gold pieces.

Peter. How many?

Alexis. About sixty.

Peter. He would have given thee promises for half the money; but the double of it does not purchase a house: ignorant wretch!

Alexis. I knew as much as that; although my birth did not appear to destine me to purchase a house anywhere; and hitherto your liberality, my father, hath supplied my wants of every kind.

Peter. Not of wisdom, not of duty, not of spirit, not of courage, not of ambition. I have educated thee among my guards and horses, among my drums and trumpets, among my flags and masts. When thou wert a child, and couldst hardly walk, I have taken thee into the arsenal, though children should not enter, according to regulations; I have there rolled cannon-balls before thee over iron plates; and I have shown thee bright new arms, bayonets and sabres; and I have pricked the back of my hands until the blood came out in many places; and I have made thee lick it; and I have then done the same to thine. Afterward, from thy tenth year, I have mixed gunpowder in thy grog; I have peppered thy peaches; I have poured bilge-water (with a little good wholesome tar in it) upon thy melons; I have

brought out girls to mock thee and cocker thee, and talk like mariners, to make thee braver. Nothing would do. Nay, recollect thee! I have myself led thee forth to the window when fellows were hanged and shot; and I have shown thee every day the halves and quarters of bodies; and I have sent an orderly or chamberlain for the heads; and I have pulled the cap up from over the eyes; and I have made thee, in spite of thee, look stedfastly upon them; incorrigible coward!

And now another word with thee about thy scandalous flight from the palace; in time of quiet too! To the point! did my brother of Austria invite thee? Did he, or did he not?

Alexis. May I answer without doing an injury or disservice to his Imperial Majesty?

Peter. Thou mayest. What injury canst thou or any one do, by the tongue, to such as he is?

Alexis. At the moment, no; he did not. Nor indeed can I assert that he at any time invited me: but he said he pitied me.

Peter. About what? hold thy tongue: let that pass. Princes never pity but when they would make traitors: then their hearts grow tenderer than tripe. He pitied thee, kind soul, when he would throw thee at thy father's head; but finding thy father too strong for him, he now commiserates the parent, laments the son's rashness and disobedience, and would not make God angry for the world. At first, however, there must have been some overture on his part; otherwise thou art too shamefaced for intrusion. Come . . thou hast never had wit enough to lie . . tell me the truth, the whole truth.

Alexis. He said that, if ever I wanted an asylum, his court was open to me.

Peter. Open! so is the tavern; but folks pay for what they get there. Open truly! and didst thou find it so?

Alexis. He received me kindly.

Peter. I see he did.

Alexis. Derision, O my father, is not the fate I merit.

Peter. True, true! it was not intended.

Alexis. Kind father! punish me then as you will.

Peter. Villain! wouldst thou kiss my hand too? Art thou ignorant that the Austrian threw thee away from him, with the same indifference as he would the outermost leaf of a sandy sunburnt lettuce?

Alexis. Alas! I am not ignorant of this.

Peter. He dismissed thee at my order. If I had demanded from him his daughter, to be the bed-fellow of a Kalmuc, he would have given her, and praised God.

Alexis. O father! is his baseness my crime?

Peter. No; thine is greater. Thy intention, I know, is to subvert the institutions it has been the labour of my lifetime to establish. Thou hast never rejoiced at my victories.

Alexis. I have rejoiced at your happiness and your safety.

Peter. Liar! coward! traitor! when the Polanders and Swedes fell before me, didst thou from thy soul congratulate me? Didst thou get drunk at home or abroad, or praise the Lord of Hosts and Saint Nicolas? Wert thou not silent and civil and low-spirited?

Alexis. I lamented the irretrievable loss of human life; I lamented that the bravest and noblest were swept away the first; that the gentlest and most domestic were the earliest mourners; that frugality was supplanted by intemperance; that order was succeeded by confusion; and that your majesty was destroying the glorious plans you alone were capable of devising.

Peter. I destroy them! how? Of what plans art thou speaking?

Alexis. Of civilising the Muscovites. The Polanders in part were civilised: the Swedes more than any other nation on the continent; and so excellently versed were they in military science, and so courageous, that every man you killed cost you seven or eight.

Peter. Thou liest; nor six. And civilised forsooth! Why, the robes of the metropolitan, him at Upsal, are not worth three ducats, between Jew and Livornese. I have no notion that Poland and Sweden shall be the only countries that produce great princes. What right have they to such as Gustavus and Sobieski? Europe ought to look to this, before discontent becomes general, and the people does to us what we have the privilege of doing to the people. I am wasting my words: there is no arguing with positive fools like thee. So thou wouldst have desired me to let the Polanders and Swedes lie still and quiet! Two such powerful nations!

Alexis. For that reason and others I would have gladly seen them rest, until our own people had increased in numbers and prosperity.

Peter. And thus thou disputest my right, before my face, to the exercise of the supreme power.

Alexis. Sir! God forbid!

Peter. God forbid indeed! What care such villains as thou art what God forbids! He forbids the son to be disobedient to the father: he forbids . . he forbids . . twenty things. I do not wish, and will not have, a successor who dreams of dead people.

Alexis. My father! I have dreamt of none such.

Peter. Thou hast; and hast talked about them . . Scythians I think they call 'em. Now who told thee, Mr. Professor, that the Scythians were a happier people than we are; that they were inoffensive; that they were free; that they wandered with their carts from pasture to pasture, from river to river; that they traded with good faith; that they fought with good courage; that they injured none, invaded none, and feared none? At this rate I have effected nothing. The great founder of Rome, I heard in Holland, slew his brother for despiting the weakness of his walls: and shall the founder of this better place spare a degenerate son, who prefers a vagabond life to a civilised one, a cart to a city, a Scythian to a Muscovite? Have I not shaved my people, and breeched them? Have I not formed them into regular armies, with bands of music and haversacks? Are bows better than cannon? shepherds than dragoons, mare's milk than brandy, raw steaks than broiled? Thine are tenets that strike at the root of politeness and sound government. Every prince in Europe is interested in rooting them out by fire and sword. There is no other way with false doctrines: breath against breath does little.

Alexis. Sire, I never have attempted to disseminate my opinions.

Peter. How couldst thou? the seed would fall only upon granite. Those, however, who caught it brought it to me.

Alexis. Never have I undervalued civilisation: on the contrary, I regretted whatever impeded it. In my opinion, the evils that have been attributed to it, sprang from its imperfections and voids; and no nation has yet acquired it more than very scantily.

Peter. How so? give me thy reasons,—thy fancies rather; for reason thou hast none.

Alexis. When I find the first of men, in rank and genius, hating one another, and becoming slanderers and liars in order to lower and vilify an opponent; when I hear the God of mercy invoked to massacres, and thanked for furthering what he reprobates and condemns,—I look back in vain on any barbarous people for worse barbarism. I have expressed my admiration of our forefathers, who, not being Christians, were yet more virtuous than those who are; more temperate, more just, more sincere, more chaste, more peaceable.

Peter. Malignant atheist!

Alexis. Indeed, my father, were I malignant I must be an atheist; for malignity is contrary to the command, and inconsistent with the belief, of God.

Peter. Am I Czar of Muscovy, and hear discourses on reason and religion? from my own son too! No, by the Holy Trinity! thou art no son of mine. If thou touchest my knee again, I crack thy knuckles with this tobacco-stopper: I wish it were a sledge-hammer for thy sake. Off, sycophant! Off, runaway slave!

Alexis. Father! father! my heart is broken! If I have offended, forgive me!

Peter. The state requires thy signal punishment.

Alexis. If the state requires it, be it so: but let my father's anger cease!

Peter. The world shall judge between us. I will brand thee with infamy.

Alexis. Until now, O father! I never had a proper sense of glory. Hear me, O Czar! let not a thing so vile as I am stand between you and the world! Let none accuse you!

Peter. Accuse me! rebel! Accuse me! traitor!

Alexis. Let none speak ill of you, O my father! The public voice shakes the palace; the public voice penetrates the grave; it precedes the chariot of Almighty God, and is heard at the judgment-seat.

Peter. Let it go to the devil! I will have none of it here in Petersburgh. Our church says nothing about it; our laws forbid it. As for thee, unnatural brute, I have no more to do with thee neither!

Ho there! chancellor! What! come at last! Wert napping, or counting thy ducats?

Chancellor. Your majesty's will and pleasure!

Peter. Is the senate assembled in that room?

Chancellor. Every member, sire.

Peter. Conduct this youth with thee, and let them judge him: thou understandest me.

Chancellor. Your majesty's commands are the breath of our nostrils.

Peter. If these rascals are remiss, I will try my new cargo of Livonian hemp upon 'em.

Chancellor (*returning*). Sire! sire!

Peter. Speak, fellow! Surely they have not

condemned him to death, without giving themselves time to read the accusation, that thou comest back so quickly.

Chancellor. No, sire! Nor has either been done.

Peter. Then thy head quits thy shoulders.

Chancellor. O sire!

Peter. Curse thy silly *sires*! what art thou about?

Chancellor. Alas! he fell.

Peter. Tie him up to thy chair then. Cowardly beast! what made him fall?

Chancellor. The hand of Death; the name of father.

Peter. Thou puzzlest me; prythee speak plainlier.

Chancellor. We told him that his crime was proven and manifest; that his life was forfeited.

Peter. So far, well enough.

Chancellor. He smiled.

Peter. He did! did he! Impudence shall do him little good. Who could have expected it from that smock-face! Go on: what then?

Chancellor. He said calmly, but not without sighing twice or thrice, 'Lead me to the scaffold: I am weary of life: nobody loves me.' I condoled with him, and wept upon his hand, holding the paper against my bosom. He took the corner of it between his fingers, and said, 'Read me this paper: read my death-warrant. Your silence and tears have signified it; yet the law has its forms. Do not keep me in suspense. My father says, too truly, I am not courageous: but the death that leads me to my God shall never terrify me.'

Peter. I have seen these white-livered knaves

die resolutely: I have seen them quietly fierce like white ferrets, with their watery eyes and tiny teeth. You read it?

Chancellor. In part, sire! When he heard your majesty's name, accusing him of treason and attempts at rebellion and parricide, he fell speechless. We raised him up: he was motionless: he was dead!

Peter. Inconsiderate and barbarous varlet as thou art, dost thou recite this ill accident to a father! And to one who has not dined! Bring me a glass of brandy.

Chancellor. And it please your majesty, might I call a . . a . .

Peter. Away, and bring it: scamper! All equally and alike shall obey and serve me.

Hearkye! bring the bottle with it: I must cool myself . . and . . hearkye! a rasher of bacon on thy life! and some pickled sturgeon, and some krout and caviar, and good strong cheese.

MIDDLETON AND MAGLIABECHI

Magliabechi. The pleasure I have enjoyed in your conversation, sir, induces me to render you such a service, as never yet was rendered by an Italian to a stranger.

Middleton. You have already rendered me several such, M. Magliabechi; nor indeed can any man of letters converse an hour with you, and not carry home with him some signal benefit.

Magliabechi. Your life is in danger, Mr. Middleton.

Middleton. How! impossible! I offend no one, in public or in private: I converse with you only: I avoid all others, and, above all, the busy-bodies of literature and politics. I court no lady: I never go to the palace: I enjoy no favours: I solicit no distinctions: I am neither poet nor painter. Surely then I, if any one, should be exempt from malignity and revenge.

Magliabechi. To remove suspense, I must inform you that your letters are opened, and your writings read by the police. The servant whom you dismissed for robbery has denounced you.

Middleton. Was it not enough for him to be permitted to plunder me with impunity? does he expect a reward for this villany? will his word or his oath be taken?

Magliabechi. Gently, Mr. Middleton. He expects no reward: he received it when he was allowed to rob you. He came recommended to you as an honest servant, by several noble families. He robbed them all; and a portion of what he stole was restored to them by the police, on condition that they should render to the Government a mutual service when called upon.

Middleton. Incredible baseness! Can you smile at it, M. Magliabechi! Can you have any communication with these wretches, these nobles, as you call them, this servant, this police!

Magliabechi. My opinion was demanded by my superiors, upon some remarks of yours on the religion of our country.

Middleton. I protest, sir, I copied them in great measure from the Latin work of a learned German.

Magliabechi. True: I know the book: it is entitled *Facetiae Facetiarum.* There is some wit

and some truth in it; but the better wit is, the more dangerous is it; and Truth, like the Sun, coming down on us too directly, may give us a brain-fever.

In this country, Mr. Middleton, we have *jalousies* not only to our windows but to our breasts: we admit but little light to either, and we live the more comfortably for so doing. If we changed this custom, we must change almost every other; all the parts of our polity having been gradually drawn closer and closer, until at last they form an inseparable mass of religion, laws, and usages. For instance, we condemn as a dangerous error the doctrine of Galileo, that the earth moves about the sun; but we condemn rather the danger than the error of asserting it.

Middleton. Pardon my interruption. When I see the doctors of your church insisting on a demonstrable falsehood, have I not reason to believe that they would maintain others less demonstrable, and more profitable? All questions of politics, of morals, and of religion, ought to be discussed: but principally should it be examined whether our eternal happiness depends on any speculative point whatever; and secondly, whether those speculative points on which various nations insist as necessary to it, are well or ill founded. I would rather be condemned for believing that to kill an ibis is a sin, than for thinking that to kill a man is not. Yet the former opinion is ridiculed by all modern nations; while the murder of men by thousands is no crime, provided they be flourishing and happy, or will probably soon become so; for then they may cause discontent in other countries, and indeed are likely to excite

the most turbulence when they sit down together the most quietly.

Magliabechi. Let us rather keep within the tenets of our church.

Middleton. Some of them are important, some are not; and some appeared so in one age of the church, which were cast aside in another.

Magliabechi. Pray which were they?

Middleton. She now worships the blessed Virgin Mary: anciently she condemned the Collyridians, for doing it, and called them heretics. Was she infallible then? or is she now? Infants were formerly admitted by her to the Eucharist, and she declared that they could not be saved without it: she now decrees that the doctrine is false. Formerly it was her belief that, before the destruction of the world, Christ should reign upon earth a thousand years, and the saints under him: at present she has no mind that either of them should be so near her. Although there are many things wherein much may be said on both sides, yet it is only on one side in any question that the same thing can be said.

Magliabechi. This is specious, and delivered temperately.

Middleton. Saint Augustine is esteemed among the infallible.

Magliabechi. Certainly; and with justice.

Middleton. He declares that the dead, even saints, are ignorant what the living do; even their own children; for the souls of the dead, he says, *interfere not in the affairs of the living.*

Magliabechi. This is strong; but divines can reconcile it with religion.

Middleton. What can they not?

Magliabechi. I will tell you what they cannot: and it is this on which I began our conversation.

Among your other works I find a manuscript on the inefficacy of prayer. I defended you to my superiors, by remarking that Cicero had asserted things incredible to himself, merely for the sake of argument, and had probably written them before he had fixed in his mind the personages to whom they should be attributed in his dialogues; that, in short, they were brought forward for no other purpose than discussion and explosion. This impiety was forgiven. But every man in Italy has a favourite saint, for whose honour he deems it meritorious to draw (I had almost said the sword) the stiletto.

Middleton. It would be safer to attempt dragging God from his throne, than to split a spangle on their petticoats, or to puff a grain of powder from their wigs: this I know. Nothing in my writings is intended to wound the jealousy of the Italians. Truth, like the juice of the poppy, in small quantities, calms men; in larger, heats and irritates them, and is attended by fatal consequences in its excess. For which reason, with plain ground before me, I would not expatiate largely; and I often made an argument, that offered itself, give way altogether and leave room for inferences. My treatise on prayer was not to be published in my lifetime.

Magliabechi. And why at any time? Supposing prayer to be totally inefficacious in the object, is not the mind exalted, the heart purified, are not our affections chastened, our desires moderated, our enjoyments enlarged by this intercourse with the Deity? And are not men the better, as cer-

tainly they are the happier, for a belief that he interferes in their concerns ? They are persuaded that there is something conditional between them, and that, if they labour under the commission of crimes, their voice will be inaudible as the voice of one under the nightmare.

Middleton. I wished to demonstrate that we often treat God in the same manner as we should treat some doating or some passionate old man : we feign, we flatter, we sing, we cry, we gesticulate.

Magliabechi. Worship him in your own manner, according to the sense he has given you ; and let those who cannot exercise that sense, rely upon those who can. Be convinced, Mr. Middleton, that you never will supplant the received ideas of God : be no less convinced that the sum of your labours in this field will be to leave the ground loose beneath you, and that he who comes after you will sink. In sickness, in our last particularly, we all are poor wretches : we are nearly all laid on a level by it : the dry-rot of the mind supervenes, and loosens whatever was fixed in it, except religion. Would you be so inhuman as to tell a friend in this condition not to be comforted ? Would you prove to him that the crucifix, which his wandering eye finds at last its resting-place, is of the same material as his bedpost ? Suppose a belief in the efficacy of prayer to be a belief altogether irrational . . you may : I never can . . suppose it to be insanity itself, would you, meeting a young man who had wandered over many countries in search of a father, until his intellects are deranged, and who, in the fullness of his heart, addresses an utter stranger as the lost parent, clings to him, kisses him, sobs upon

his breast, and finds comfort only by repeating *father! father!* would you, Mr. Middleton, say to this affectionate fond creature, *go home, sit quiet, be silent!* and persuade him that his father is lost to him?

Middleton. God forbid!

Magliabechi. You have done it: do it no more. The madman has not heard you; and the father will pardon you when you meet.

Middleton. Far be it from my wishes and from my thoughts to unhinge those portals through which we must enter to the performance of our social duties: but I am sensible of no irreligion, I acknowledge no sorrow or regret, in having attempted to demonstrate that God is totally and far removed from our passions and infirmities, and that whatever seems fit to him, will never seem unfit in consequence of our entreaties. I would inculcate entire resignation to the divine decrees, acquiescence in the divine wisdom, confidence in the divine benevolence. There is something of frail humanity, something of its very decrepitude, in our ideas of God: we are foolish and ignorant in the same manner, and almost to the same degree, as those painters are, who append a grey beard to his chin, draw wrinkles across his brow, and cover him with a gaudy and flowing mantle.

Our Saviour does not command us to pray, although his example, for especial purposes, appears to countenance it. His nature, and the nature of his mission, might require this intercourse. He says only, 'when ye pray,' &c., or, in other words, 'if you will pray let your prayer be,' &c. For on more than one occasion, desirous

as he was of interfering but little with established usages, he condemned the prayers of the Jews.

Magliabechi. They were too long.

Middleton. They were not longer (as far as I know) than those of other nations. In short, if we believe the essence of God to be immutable, we must believe his will to be so. It is insanity to imagine that his determination can be altered by our whims or wishes; therefore it is not only more wise but also more reverent to suppress them, both in action and in speech. Supposing him altered or moved by us, we suppose him subject to our own condition. If he pardons, he corrects his first judgment; he owns himself to have been wrong and hasty; than which supposition what impiety can be greater?

Magliabechi. Do you question everything that is not in the form of syllogism, or enthymema, or problem with corollary and solution?

Middleton. I never said that what is indemonstrable must therefore be untrue: but whatever is indemonstrable may be questioned, and, if important, should be. We are not to tremble at the shaking of weak minds: Reason does not make them so: she, like Virtue, is debilitated by indulgences, and sickened to death by the blasts of heat and cold blown alternately from your church.

Magliabechi. Do you conceive God then to be indifferent to our virtues or vices, our obstinacy or repentance?

Middleton. I would not enter into such questions: and indeed I have always been slow to deliver my more serious opinions in conversation, feeling how inadequately any great subject must be discussed within such limits, and how pre-

sumptuous it would appear, in one like me, to act as if I had collected all that could be said, or even what could be said best, on the occasion. Neither to run against nor to avoid your interrogatory: there are probably those who believe that, in the expansion and improvement of our minds hereafter, they will be so sensitive to the good or evil we have done on earth, as to be rewarded or punished in the most just proportion, without any impulse given to, or suffered by, the First Cause and sole Disposer of things and of events. How rational may be this creed, I leave, with the other, to speculative men; wishing them to recollect that unseasonable and undue heat must warp the instrument by which alone their speculations can be becomingly and rightly made. If God is sensible to displeasure, which is a modification of pain, at the faults or vices of his creatures, he must suffer at once a myriad times more of it than any of them, and he must endure the same sufferings a myriad times longer.

Magliabechi. This hurts our common faith.

Middleton. Pass over what may offend your faith, common or private; mind only (which I am sure you will do) what may disturb the clearness of your conscience and impede the activity of your benevolence. Let us never say openly what may make a good man unhappy or unquiet, unless it be to warn him against what we know will make him more so; for instance, if you please, a false friend; or, if you would rather, a teacher who, while he pretends to be looking over the lesson, first slips his hand into his scholar's pocket, then ties him adroitly to his chair by the coat-skirt, then, running off with his book, tells

him to cry out if he dares, promises at last to give him ten better, and, if he should be hungry and thirsty, bids him never to mind it, for he will eat his dinner for him and drink his wine, and say a Latin grace.

Magliabechi. Ha! now you are stretching out your objections against our church, disregarding what Catholics and Protestants hold in common; our prayers, for instance. I have always found that, when we have carried off the mysteries in triumph, you fall foul upon our miracles and our saints.

Middleton. That is idle.

Magliabechi. I am rejoiced to hear you confess it; you then really have some veneration for those holy men whom the Church hath appointed for our intercessors?

Middleton. Here we come again into the open road, with visible objects before us. I venerate all holy men: but, doubting whether my own prayers to God would alter his mind concerning me, I should yet more betray my deficiency of confidence in his promises, if I trusted a person who is no relative to him rather than his own son; that is, if I trusted the weaker in preference to the stronger; the worse in preference to the better; him who at his birth and after his birth had sins, to him who was born and lived and died with none. Beside, I have no proof whatever that God requires such counsellors and mediators. Must we believe that some men are lying in the grave while others are conversing with him, and busied in turning him from indignation to mercy? We are informed by Holy Writ, that all alike are to be awakened by sound of trumpet. What then would become of

me if I doubted it? And must I not doubt it if I suppose that some are already at the right hand of God?

Magliabechi. His divine will may order it. We know he promised the repentant thief on the cross that he should sup with him that night in Paradise.

Middleton. He was very merciful to that thief, and has been to many since, who never were upon the cross at all, but who picked pockets under it. What he promised, it would be impiety to doubt of his performing; but I never heard of his promise of supper or Paradise to deacon or doctor, to canon or bishop; much less do I believe that they can introduce a friend or dependent. If you would be consistent and go upon certainty, you would pray to the thief; for beyond all controversy he hath secured his place.

Magliabechi. The Church has never canonized him.

Middleton. What! have saints no sanctity until the Church hath given it? Do they mount into heaven from the Vatican? God then does not appoint his own counsellors! They are nominated like the cardinals, and by the same voice!

Magliabechi. After due examination.

Middleton. There indeed lies the difference. I should have more confidence in God's chosen thief.

Magliabechi. You would rather trust a robber than bend before the image of a saint?

Middleton. At least I know that the one was accepted; I am ignorant that the other was.

Magliabechi. This indeed is even worse than what you most abominate, idolatry.

Middleton. I am not one of those who consider

idolatry as the most heinous of sins. In the commission of idolatry for a lifetime, there is less wickedness than in one malignant action or one injurious and blighting word.

Magliabechi. O Mr. Middleton! Idolatry is denounced for God's especial vengeance: yet in the blindness of your hearts you Protestants accuse us of this tremendous sin. A thousand times have you been told that we do not venerate what represents, but what is represented.

Middleton. You tell us that you do not worship images, but that you worship in them what they express: be it so: the Pagans did the same, neither better nor worse. What will you answer to the accusation of worshipping a living man? Adoration is offered undisguisedly and openly to priests and monks, however profligate and infamous their lives may have been and be. Every Pope is adored by the Holy College on his elevation.

Magliabechi. We suppose him to be the representative of Jesus Christ.

Middleton. His legate is also his representative, and a *valet de chambre* the legate's. We may obey one man in place of another, but not adore him. The representative system is good only on this side of adoration.

Magliabechi. Prayer, at all times serviceable, may apparently on some occasions be misapplied. Father Onesimo Sozzifante, on his return from England, presented to me a singular illustration of my remark. He had resided some years in London, as chaplain to the Sardinian envoy: in the first floor of his lodging-house dwelt Mr. Harbottle, a young clergyman, learned, of elegant

manners, yet fond of fox-hunting. Inconsistencies like these are found nowhere but in your country; in others, those who have enough for one side of the character, have not enough for the opposite: you in general are sufficiently well-stored to squander much of your intellectual property, to neglect much, and to retain much.

Mutual civilities had passed between the two ecclesiastics, and Father Onesimo had received from Mr. Harbottle many invitations to dinner. After the first, he had declined them, deeming the songs and disputations in a slight degree indecorous. The party at this was clerical: and although he represented it as more turbulent in its conclusion than ours are, and although there were many warm disputants, chiefly on jockies or leaders in Parliament, he assured me he was much edified and pleased, when, at the removal of the dishes, each drank devoutly to his old friend. 'I thought of you,' said he, 'my dear Magliabechi, for every one had then before his eyes the complacent guide of his youth. Mine shed a few tears; at which my friends glanced one upon another and smiled; for from an Englishman not even the crucifix can extort a tear.'

Onesimo was at breakfast with Mr. Harbottle, when an Italian ran breathless into the room, kissed the father's hand, and begged him to come instantly and attend a dying man. 'We will go together,' said Mr. Harbottle. Following their informant, they passed through several lanes and alleys, and at last mounted the stairs of a garret, in which was lying a youth, stabbed the night before by a Livornese, about one of those women who excite the most quarrels and deserve the

fewest. 'Leave me for a moment,' said Father Sozzifante, 'I must hear his confession.'

Hardly had he spoken, when out came all whom kindness or piety or curiosity had collected, and 'He is in Paradise!' was the exclamation. Mr. Harbottle then entered, and was surprised to hear the worthy confessor ask of the dead man whether he forgave his enemy, and answer in another tone, 'Yes, father, from my heart I pardon him.'

On returning, he remarked that it appeared strange to him. 'Sir,' answered Onesimo, 'the Catholic Church enjoins forgiveness of injuries.' 'All churches enjoin the same,' replied Mr. Harbottle. 'He was unable to speak for himself,' said the father, 'and therefore I answered for him like a Christian.'

Mr. Harbottle, as became him, was silent. On their return homeward they passed by a place which, if I remember, is called Newgate, a gate above which, it appears, criminals are hanged. At that very hour the cord was round the neck of a wretch who was repeating the Lord's prayer: the first words they heard were, 'Give us this day our daily bread.' The father looked at his companion with awe, spreading his fingers on his sleeve, and pressing it until he turned his face toward him. They both pushed on; but, such was the crowd, they could not pass the suppliant before he had uttered, 'And lead us not into temptation.' The good father stepped before Mr. Harbottle, and, lifting his hands above his ears, would have said something; but his companion cried smartly, 'I have seals to my watch, Signor Sozzifante, and there is never a fellow

hanged but he makes twenty fit for it: pray walk on.'

Fairly out of the crowd, 'Poor sinful soul!' said the father, 'ere this time thou art in purgatory! Thy daily bread! alas, thou hast eaten the last mouthful! Thy temptation! thou wilt find but few temptations there, I warrant thee, my son! Even these divine words, Mr. Harbottle, may come a little out of season, you perceive.'

Mr. Harbottle went home dissatisfied. In about an hour a friend of his from Oxford called on him: as the weather was warm, the door standing ajar, Sozzifante heard him repeat the history of their adventure, and add: 'I will be damned if in my firm persuasion the fellow is not a Jesuit: I never should have thought it: he humbugged me about the dead man, and perhaps got another hanged to quiz me. Would you believe it? He has been three good years in getting up this farce; the first I have ever caught him, and the last he shall ever catch me at.'

Father Onesimo related to me these occurrences, without a word of reproach or an accent of ill-humour. 'The English is a strong language,' said he placidly, 'and the people, the least deceivers in the world, are naturally the most indignant at a suspicion of deceit. Mr. Harbottle, who, I dare to say, is ripened ere this time into an exemplary and holy man, was then rather fitter for society than for the church. Do you know,' said he in my ear, although we were alone, 'I have seen him pay his laundress (and there was nothing between them) five shillings for one week only! a sum that serves any cardinal the whole winter-quarter: in April and May indeed,

from one thing or other, linen wants washing oftener.'

Mr. Middleton, I have proved my candour, I trust, and my freedom from superstition: but he who seeks will find: and perhaps he who in obstinacy closeth his eyes long together, will open them just at the moment when he shall meet what he avoided. I will inform you of some facts I know, proving the efficacy of prayer to saints.

Giacomo Pastrani of Genoa, a citizen not abundant in the gifts of fortune, had however in his possession two most valuable and extremely rare things, a virtuous wife and a picture of his patron Saint Giacomo by Leonardo. The wife had long been ill: her malady was expensive: their substance was diminishing: still no offers had tempted him, although many had been made, to sell the picture. At last he refused to alienate it otherwise than in favour of a worthy priest, and only as the price of supplications to the Virgin. 'Who knows how many it may require?' said the holy man; 'and it is difficult to make a prayer which the Virgin has not heard before; perhaps fifty will hardly do. Now fifty crowns would be little for such protection.' The invalid, who heard the conversation, wept aloud. 'Take it, take it,' said the husband, and wept too, lifting it from the nail, and kissing for the last time the glass that covered it. The priest made a genuflexion, and did the same. His supplications prevailed; the wife recovered. The priest, hearing that the picture was very valuable, although the master was yet uncertain, and that in Genoa there was no artist who could clean it, waited for that

operation until he went to Milan. Here it was ascertained to be the work of Leonardo, and a dealer gave him four thousand crowns for it. He returned in high glee at what had happened, and communicated it to all his acquaintance. The recovered woman, on hearing it, fell sick again immediately, and died. Wishing to forget the sacrifice of her picture, she had prayed no more to Saint Giacomo; and the Virgin, we may presume, on that powerful saint's intercession, had abandoned her.

Awful fact! Mr. Middleton. Now mark another perhaps more so. I could overwhelm you with a crowd of witnesses.

Middleton. My dear sir, I do perceive you could.

Magliabechi. The saints in general are more vindictive than our Lady; of whose forbearance, not unaccompanied at last by chastisement, I will relate to you a memorable example. I have indeed no positive proof that he of whom I am about to speak had neglected his prayers to the Virgin; but, from what he certainly did, it is by no means uncharitable to suppose it. He moreover, by this action, as you will remark, was the cause why others were constrained to omit the salutary act of supplication as they went along.

Middleton. I am in suspense.

Magliabechi. Contiguous to my own villa there is one belonging to Signor Anco-Marzio Natale del Poggio. At the corner of the road was inserted in the garden-wall an image of the blessed Virgin, with the *bambino* in her arms. Anco-Marzio had been heard to call it, somewhat hastily, an ugly one, and to declare that he would take it down.

The threat however, for several years, was not carried into execution : at last it was accomplished. Behold the consequence ! Robbers climbed over the wall (would you believe it ?) in the very place whence the effigy had been removed, and upon the very night too of its removal : and Anco-Marzio lost not only the whole crop of his lemons, none of which had ever been stolen in former years, but also a pair of knee-buckles, which his maid servant had taken that occasion of polishing with quicklime, and of which he deeply lamented the loss, not because a crown could scarcely have replaced them, but because they were his father's, and he had bequeathed them by his last will and testament to a very dear old friend.

No reply, no reasoning, can affect this. I know the fact : I visited the spot the next morning : I saw the broken wall : I saw the leaves of the lemon-trees under the vases, without a lemon the size of a filbert on the plants. Who delayed the mad project so long ? who permitted it at last ? who punished it ? and for what end ? Never afterward did Anco-Marzio pass an effigy of the blessed Virgin, but he kissed it again and again with due reverence, although it were wet with whitewash or paint. Every day did he renew the flowers before the one whose tabernacle he had violated, placing them where he could bend his head over them in humble adoration as he returned at night from his business in the city. It has indeed been suspected that he once omitted this duty ; certain it is, that he once was negligent in it. He acknowledged to me that, coming home later than usual, and desirous of turning the

corner and reaching the villa as soon as might be, it being dusk, he was inclined to execute his duty too perfunctoriously, and encountered, instead of the flowers, a bunch of butchers-broom. None grows thereabout. I do not insist on this: but the lemons, Mr. Middleton! the thieves, Mr. Middleton! the breach in the garden-wall, made for an irreligious purpose, and serving to punish irreligion. Well may you ponder. These things cannot occur among you Englishmen.

Middleton. Excuse me, I pray you, my dear sir! Knowing the people of this country, my wonder was (for indeed I did wonder) that the lemons had never been stolen until that year.

Magliabechi. They never were, I do assure you from my own knowledge, for the last thirty.

Middleton. The greater of the two miracles lies here.

Magliabechi. Of the two miracles? Astonishment and sudden terror make us oftentimes see things doubly: for my part, I declare upon my conscience I can see but one.

Middleton. Nor I neither; to speak ingenuously.

Magliabechi. Ha! ha! I comprehend you, and perhaps have to blame my deficiency of judgment in going a single step aside from the main subject of prayer. Now then for it: arm yourself with infidelity: chew the base metal, as boys do while they are whipped, lest they cry out.

Middleton. I am confident, from your present good-humour, that the castigation you meditate to inflict on me will be lenient. He is not commended who casts new opinions for men, but he who chimes in with old.

Magliabechi. The wisest of us, Mr. Middleton, cannot separate the true from the untrue in everything.

Middleton. It required the hand of God himself, as we are informed, to divide the light from the darkness: we cannot do it, but we can profit by it. What is light we may call so; and why not what is dark?

Magliabechi. Would it fail to excite a discontent in England, if your Parliament should order Christmas to be celebrated in April? Yet Joseph Scaliger, the most learned man that ever existed, and among the least likely to be led astray by theory, has proved to the satisfaction of many not unlearned, that the nativity of our Lord happened in that month.

Middleton. As the matter is indifferent both in fact and consequences, I would let it stand. No direct or indirect gain, no unworthy end of any kind, can be obtained by its continuance: it renders men neither the more immoral nor the more dastardly: it keeps them neither the more ignorant of their duties nor the more subservient to any kind of usurpation.

Magliabechi. There may be inconveniences in an opposite direction. Pride and arrogance are not the more amiable for the coarseness of their garb. It is better to wrap up religion in a wafer, and swallow it quietly and contentedly, than to extract from it all its bitterness, make wry faces over it, and quarrel with those who decline the delicacy and doubt the utility of the preparation. Our religion, like the vast edifices in which we celebrate it, seems dark when first entered from without. The vision accommodates itself gradually

to the place; and we are soon persuaded that we see just as much as we should see.

Middleton. Be it so: but why admit things for which we have no authority, and which we cannot prove? I have left unsaid a great deal of what I might have said. Not being addicted to ridicule, nor capable of sustaining a comic part, I never have spoken a word about *the bread of the angels.*

Magliabechi. God forbid you should!

Middleton. Even your own church, I imagine, will hardly insist that the bread taken by Christians here on earth, in the sacrament of the eucharist, is the ordinary or extraordinary sustenance of angels. For whatever *our* faith may be, whatever supports it may require, *theirs* is perfect and has received its fruit.

Magliabechi. This is specious; so are many of your thoughts; but as I cannot prove the fact, neither can you prove the contrary; and we both perhaps shall act wisely in considering it as a phrase of devotion.

Middleton. I should think so, if the latitude of such phrases had not offered too many fields of battle. But let me hear the miracle with which you threatened me.

Magliabechi. My dear friend, I am now about to lay before you a fact universally known in our city, and which evinces at once the efficacy of prayer, even where it was irrational, and the consequence of neglecting it afterward.

Angiolina Cecci on the day before her nuptials took the sacrament most devoutly, and implored of our Florentine saint, Maria Bagnesi, to whose family she was related, her intervention for three

blessings: that she might have one child only; that the *cavaliere serviente*, agreed on equally by her father and her husband, might be faithful to her; and lastly that, having beautiful hair, it never might turn grey. Now mark me. Assured of success to her suit by a smile on the countenance of the saint, she neglected her prayers and diminished her alms thenceforward. The money-box, which is shaken during the celebration of mass to recompense the priest for the performance of that holy ceremony, was shaken aloud before her day after day, and never drew a *crazia* from her pocket. She turned away her face from it, even when the collection was made to defray the arrears for the beatification of Bagnesi. Nine months after her marriage she was delivered of a female infant. I am afraid she expressed some discontent at the dispensations of Providence; for within an hour afterward she brought forth another of the same sex. She became furious, intractable, desperate; sent the babes without seeing them, into the country, as indeed our ladies usually do; and spake slightingly and maliciously of Saint Maria Bagnesi. The consequence was a puerperal fever, which continued several weeks, and was removed at great expense to her family, in masses, wax-candles, and processions. Pictures of the Virgin, wherever they were found by experience to be of more peculiar and more speedy efficacy, were hired at heavy charges from the convents: the cordeliers, to punish her pride and obstinacy, would not carry theirs to the house for less than forty *scudi*.

She recovered, admitted her friends to converse with her, raised herself upon her pillow, and

accepted some consolation. At last it was agreed by her physicians that she might dress herself and eat brains and liver. Probably she was ungrateful for a benefit so signal and unexpected; since no sooner did her *cameriera* comb her hair, than off it came by the handful. She then perceived her error, but, instead of repairing it, abandoned herself to anguish and lamentation. Her *cavaliere serviente*, finding her bald, meagre, and eyesore, renewed his addresses to the mother. The husband, with two daughters to provide for, the only two ever reared out of the many entrusted to the same peasants, counted over again and again the dowry, shook his head, sighed piteously, and, hanging on the image of Maria Bagnesi a silver heart of five ounces, which, knowing it to have been stolen, he bought at a cheap rate of a Jew on Ponte Vecchio, calculated that the least of impending evils was, to purchase an additional bed just large enough for one.

You ponder, Mr. Middleton: you appear astonished at these visitations: you know my sincerity: you fully credit me: I cannot doubt a moment of your conviction: I perceive it marked strongly on your countenance.

Middleton. Indeed, M. Magliabechi, I now discover the validity of prayer to saints, and the danger of neglecting them: recommend me in yours to Saint Maria Bagnesi

THE EMPRESS CATHARINE AND PRINCESS DASHKOF

Catharine. Into his heart! into his heart! If he escapes we perish.

Do you think, Dashkof, they can hear me through the double door? Yes; hark! they heard me: they have done it.

What bubbling and gurgling! he groaned but once.

Listen! his blood is busier now than it ever was before. I should not have thought it could have splashed so loud upon the floor, although our bed indeed is rather of the highest.

Put your ear against the lock.

Dashkof. I hear nothing.

Catharine. My ears are quicker than yours, and know these notes better. Let me come . . . Hear nothing! You did not wait long enough, nor with coolness and patience. There! . . . there again! The drops are now like lead: every half-minute they penetrate the eider-down and the mattress . . How now! which of these fools has brought his dog with him? What tramping and lapping! The creature will carry the marks all about the palace with his feet and muzzle.

Dashkof. O heavens!

Catharine. Are you afraid?

Dashkof. There is a horror that surpasses fear, and will have none of it. I knew not this before.

Catharine. You turn pale and tremble. You should have supported me, in case I had required it

Dashkof. I thought only of the tyrant. Neither in life nor in death could any one of these miscreants make me tremble. But the husband slain by his wife : . . I saw not into my heart : I looked not into it : and it chastises me.

Catharine. Dashkof, are you then really unwell ?

Dashkof. What will Russia, what will Europe say?

Catharine. Russia has no more voice than a whale. She may toss about in her turbulence ; but my artillery (for now indeed I can safely call it mine) shall stun and quiet her.

Dashkof. God grant . . .

Catharine. I cannot but laugh at thee, my pretty Dashkof ! God grant forsooth ! He has granted all we wanted from him at present, the safe removal of this odious Peter.

Dashkof. Yet Peter loved *you* : and even the worst husband must leave surely the recollection of some sweet moments. The sternest must have trembled, both with apprehension and with hope, at the first alteration in the health of his consort ; at the first promise of true union, imperfect without progeny. Then there are thanks rendered together to heaven, and satisfactions communicated, and infant words interpreted ; and when the one has failed to pacify the sharp cries of babyhood, pettish and impatient as sovereignty itself, the success of the other in calming it, and the unenvied triumph of this exquisite ambition, and the calm gazes that it wins upon it.

Catharine. Are these, my sweet friend, your lessons from the stoic school ? Are not they rather the pale-faced reflections of some kind epithalamiast from Livonia or Bessarabia ? Come, come away. I am to know nothing at present of

the deplorable occurrence. Did not you wish his death ?

Dashkof. It is not his death that shocks me.

Catharine. I understand you : beside, you said as much before.

Dashkof. I fear for your renown.

Catharine. And for your own good name,—ay, Dashkof ?

Dashkof. He was not, nor did I ever wish him to be, my friend.

Catharine. You hated him.

Dashkof. Even hatred may be plucked up too roughly.

Catharine. Europe shall be informed of my reasons, if she should ever find out that I countenanced the conspiracy. She shall be persuaded that her repose made the step necessary ; that my own life was in danger : that I fell upon my knees to soften the conspirators ; that, only when I had fainted, the horrible deed was done. She knows already that Peter was always ordering new exercises and uniforms : and my ministers can evince at the first audience my womanly love of peace.

Dashkof. Europe may be more easily subjugated than duped.

Catharine. She shall be both, God willing.

Dashkof. The majesty of thrones will seem endangered by this open violence.

Catharine. The majesty of thrones is never in jeopardy by those who sit upon them. A sovereign may cover one with blood more safely than a subject can pluck a feather out of the cushion. It is only when the people does the violence that we hear an ill report of it. Kings poison and

stab one another in pure legitimacy. Do your republican ideas revolt from such a doctrine ?

Dashkof. I do not question this right of theirs, and never will oppose their exercise of it. But if you prove to the people how easy a matter it is to extinguish an emperor, and how pleasantly and prosperously we may live after it, is it not probable that they also will now and then try the experiment ; particularly if any one in Russia should hereafter hear of glory and honour, and how immortal are these by the consent of mankind, in all countries and ages, in him who releases the world, or any part of it, from a lawless and ungovernable despot ? The chances of escape are many, and the greater if he should have no accomplices. Of his renown there is no doubt at all : that is placed above chance and beyond time, by the sword he hath exercised so righteously.

Catharine. True ; but we must reason like democrats no longer. Republicanism is the best thing we can have, when we cannot have power : but no one ever held the two together. I am now autocrat.

Dashkof. Truly then may I congratulate you. The dignity is the highest a mortal can attain.

Catharine. I know and feel it.

Dashkof. I wish you always may.

Catharine. I doubt not the stability of power : I can make constant both Fortune and Love. My Dashkof smiles at this conceit : she has here the same advantage, and does not envy her friend, even the autocracy.

Dashkof. Indeed I do, and most heartily.

Catharine. How !

Dashkof. I know very well what those intended

who first composed the word : but they blundered egregiously. In spite of them, it signifies power over oneself ; of all power the most enviable, and the least consistent with power over others.

I hope and trust there is no danger to you from any member of the council-board inflaming the guards or other soldiery.

Catharine. The members of the council-board did not sit *at* it, but *upon* it, and their tactics were performed cross-legged. What partisans are to be dreaded of that commander-in-chief, whose chief command is over pantaloons and facings, whose utmost glory is perched on loops and feathers, and who fancies that battles are to be won rather by pointing the hat than the cannon ?

Dashkof. Peter was not insensible to glory : few men are : but wiser heads than his have been perplexed in the road to it, and many have lost it by their ardour to attain it. I have always said that, unless we devote ourselves to the public good, we may perhaps be celebrated : but it is beyond the power of Fortune, or even of Genius, to exalt us above the dust.

Catharine. Dashkof, you are a sensible sweet creature, but rather too romantic on *principle*, and rather too visionary on glory. I shall always both esteem and love you ; but no other woman in Europe will be great enough to endure you, and you will really put the men *hors de combat.* Thinking is an enemy to beauty, and no friend to tenderness. Men can ill brook it one in another : in women it renders them what they would fain call scornful (vain assumption of high prerogative !), and what you would find bestial and outrageous. As for my reputation, which I know is

dear to you, I can purchase all the best writers in Europe with a snuff-box each, and all the remainder with its contents. Not a gentleman of the Academy but is enchanted by a toothpick, if I deign to send it him. A brilliant makes me Semiramis, a watch-chain Venus, a ring Juno. Voltaire is my friend.

Dashkof. He was Frederick's.

Catharine. I shall be the *Pucelle* of Russia. No! I had forgotten . . he has treated her scandalously.

Dashkof. Does your Majesty value the flatteries of a writer who ridicules the most virtuous and glorious of his nation? who crouched before that monster of infamy, Louis XV; and that worse monster, the king his predecessor? He reviled with every indignity and indecency the woman who rescued France, and who alone, of all that ever led the armies of that kingdom, made its conquerors the English tremble. Its monarchs and marshals cried and ran like capons, flapping their fine crests from wall to wall, and cackling at one breath defiance and surrender. The village girl drew them back into battle, and placed the heavens themselves against the enemies of Charles. She seemed supernatural: the English recruits deserted: they would not fight against God.

Catharine. Fools and bigots!

Dashkof. The whole world contained none other, excepting those who fed upon them. The maid of Orleans was pious and sincere: her life asserted it; her death confirmed it. Glory to her, Catharine, if you love glory. Detestation to him who has profaned the memory of this most holy martyr, the guide and avenger of her king, the redeemer and saviour of her country.

Catharine. Be it so: but Voltaire buoys me up above some impertinent troublesome qualms.

Dashkof. If deism had been prevalent in Europe, he would have been the champion of Christianity: and if the French had been Protestants, he would have shed tears upon the papal slipper. He buoys up no one; for he gives no one hope. He may amuse: dulness itself must be amused indeed by the versatility and brilliancy of his wit.

Catharine. While I was meditating on the great action I have now so happily accomplished, I sometimes thought his wit feeble. This idea, no doubt, originated from the littleness of everything in comparison with my undertaking.

Dashkof. Alas! we lose much when we lose the capacity of being delighted by men of genius, and gain little when we are forced to run to them for incredulity.

Catharine. I shall make some use of my philosopher at Ferney. I detest him as much as you do; but where will you find me another who writes so pointedly? You really then fancy that people care for truth? Innocent Dashkof! Believe me, there is nothing so delightful in life as to find a liar in a person of repute. Have you never heard good folks rejoicing at it? or rather, can you mention to me any one who has not been in raptures when he could communicate such glad tidings? The goutiest man would go on foot without a crutch to tell his friend of it at midnight; and would cross the Neva for the purpose, when he doubted whether the ice would bear him. Men in general are so weak in truth, that they are obliged to put their bravery under it, to prop it. Why do they pride themselves, think you, on

their courage, when the bravest of them is, by many degrees, less courageous than a mastiff-bitch in the straw? It is only that they may be rogues without hearing it, and make their fortunes without rendering an account of them.

Now we chat again as we used to do. Your spirits and your enthusiasm have returned. Courage, my sweet Dashkof; do not begin to sigh again. We never can want husbands while we are young and lively. Alas! I cannot always be so. Heigho! But serfs and preferment will do . . none shall refuse me at ninety . . Paphos or Tobolsk.

Have not you a song for me?

Dashkof. German or Russian?

Catharine. Neither, neither. Some frightful word might drop . . might remind me . . no, nothing shall remind me. French rather: French songs are the liveliest in the world.

Is the rouge off my face?

Dashkof. It is rather in streaks and mottles, excepting just under the eyes, where it sits as it should do.

Catharine. I am heated and thirsty: I cannot imagine how: I think we have not yet taken our coffee . . was it so strong? What am I dreaming of? I could eat only a slice of melon at breakfast; my duty urged me *then*; and dinner is yet to come. Remember, I am to faint at the midst of it when the intelligence comes in, or rather when, in despite of every effort to conceal it from me, the awful truth has flashed upon my mind. Remember too, you are to catch me, and to cry for help, and to tear those fine flaxen hairs which we laid up together on the toilet, and we are both to be as inconsolable as we can be for the life of

us. Not now, child, not now. Come, sing. I know not how to fill up the interval. Two long hours yet! how stupid and tiresome! I wish all things of the sort could be done and be over in a day. They are mightily disagreeable when by nature one is not cruel. People little know my character. I have the tenderest heart upon earth: I am courageous, but I am full of weaknesses: I possess in perfection the higher part of men, and, to a friend I may say it, the most amiable part of women. Ho! ho! at last you smile: now your thoughts upon that.

Dashkof. I have heard fifty men swear it.

Catharine. They lied, the knaves! I hardly knew them by sight. We were talking of the sad necessity . . . Ivan must follow next: he is heir to the throne. I have a wild, impetuous, pleasant little *protégé*, who shall attempt to rescue him, I will have him persuaded and incited to it, and assured of pardon on the scaffold. He can never know the trick we play him; unless his head, like a bottle of Bordeaux, ripens its contents in the sawdust. Orders are given that Ivan be dispatched at the first disturbance in the precincts of the castle; in short, at the fire of the sentry: but not now: another time: two such scenes together, and without some interlude, would perplex people.

I thought we spoke of singing: do not make me wait, my dearest creature! Now cannot you sing as usual, without smoothing your dove's-throat with your handkerchief, and taking off your necklace? Give it me then; give it me: I will hold it for you: I must play with something.

Sing, sing; I am quite impatient.

GENERAL KLEBER AND FRENCH OFFICERS

An English officer was sitting with his back against the base of the Great Pyramid. He sometimes looked toward those of elder date and ruder materials before him, sometimes was absorbed in thought, and sometimes was observed to write in a pocket-book with great rapidity.

'If he were not writing', said a French naturalist to a young ensign, 'I should imagine him to have lost his eyesight by the ophthalmia. He does not see us: level your rifle: we cannot find a greater curiosity.'

The arts prevailed: the officer slided with extended arms from his resting-place: the blood, running from his breast, was audible as a swarm of insects in the sand. No other sound was heard. Powder had exploded; life had passed away; not a vestige remained of either.

'Let us examine his papers,' said the naturalist.

'Pardon me, sir,' answered the ensign; 'my first inquiry on such occasions is *what's o'clock?* and afterward I pursue my mineralogical researches.'

At these words he drew forth the dead man's watch, and stuck it into his sash, while with the other hand he snatched out a purse containing some zecchins: every part of the dress was examined, and not quite fruitlessly.

'See! a locket with a miniature of a young woman!' Such it was: a modest and lovely countenance.

'Ha! ha!' said the ensign; 'a few touches,

a very few touches ; I can give them ; and Adela will take this for me. Two inches higher, and the ball had split it : what a thoughtless man he was ! There is gold in it too ; it weighs heavy Peste ! an old woman at the back ! grey as a cat.

It was the officer's mother, in her old age, as he had left her. There was something of sweet piety, not unsaddened by presage, in the countenance. He severed it with his knife, and threw it into the bosom of her son. Two foreign letters and two pages in pencil were the contents of the pocket-book. Two locks of hair had fallen out : one rested on his eyelashes, for the air was motionless ; the other was drawn to the earth by his blood.

The papers were taken to General Kleber by the naturalist and his associate, with a correct recital of the whole occurrence, excepting the appendages of watch, zecchins, and locket.

'Young man,' said Kleber gravely, 'is this a subject of merriment to you ? Who knows whether you or I may not be deprived of life as suddenly and unexpectedly ? He was not your enemy : perhaps he was writing to a mother or sister. God help them ! these suffer most from war. The heart of the far-distant is the scene of its most cruel devastations. Leave the papers : you may go : call the interpreter.'

He entered.

'Read this letter.'

My adored Henry . . .

'Give it me,' cried the general ; he blew a strong fire from his pipe and consumed it.

'Read the other.'

My kind-hearted and beloved son . .

'Stop: read the last line only.'

The interpreter answered, 'It contains merely the name and address.'

'I ask no questions: read them, and write them down legibly.'

He took the paper, tore off the margin, and placed the line in his snuff-box.

'Give me that paper in pencil, with the mark of sealing-wax on it.'

He snatched it, shook some snuff upon it, and shrunk back. It was no sealing-wax: it was a drop of blood; one from the heart; one only; dry, but seeming fresh.

'Read.'

'Yes, my dear mother, the greatest name that exists among mortals is that of Sydney. He who now bears it in the front of battle could not succour me: I had advanced too far: I am however no prisoner. Take courage, my too fond mother: I am among the Arabs, who detest the French: they liberated me. They report, I know not upon what authority, that Bonaparte has deserted his army, and escaped from Egypt.'

'Stop instantly,' cried Kleber, rising. 'Gentlemen,' added he to his staff-officers, 'my duty obliges me to hear this unbecoming language on your late commander-in-chief: retire you a few moments . . . Continue.'

'He hates every enemy according to his courage and his virtues: he abominates what he cannot debase, at home or abroad.'

'Oh!' whispered Kleber to himself, 'he knows the man so well.'

'The first then are Nelson and Sir Sydney Smith, whose friends could expect no mercy at his hands. If the report be anything better than an Arabian tale, I will surrender myself to his successor as prisoner of war, and perhaps may be soon exchanged. How will this little leaf reach you? God knows how and when!'

'Is there nothing else to examine?'

'One more leaf.'

'Read it.'

WRITTEN IN ENGLAND ON THE BATTLE OF ABOUKIR

Land of all marvels in all ages past,
Egypt, I hail thee from a far-off shore;
I hail thee, doom'd to rise again at last,
And flourish, as in early youth, once more.

How long hast thou lain desolate! how long
The voice of gladness in thy halls hath ceast!
Mute, e'en as Memnon's lyre, the poet's song,
And half-suppress'd the chant of cloister'd priest.

Even he, loquacious as a vernal bird,
Love, in thy plains and in thy groves is dumb,
Nor on thy thousand Nile-fed streams is heard
The reed that whispers happier days to come.

O'er cities shadowing some dread name divine
Palace and fane return the hyena's cry,
And hoofless camels in long single line
Stalk slow, with foreheads level to the sky.

No errant outcast of a lawless isle,
Mocker of heaven and earth, with vows and prayers,
Comes thy confiding offspring to beguile,
And rivet to his wrist the chain he wears.

Britain speaks now; her thunder thou hast heard;
Conqueror in every land, in every sea;
Valour and Truth proclaim the almighty word,
And all thou ever hast been, thou shalt be.

'Defender and passionate lover of thy country,' cried Kleber, 'thou art less unfortunate than thy auguries. Enthusiastic Englishman! to which of your conquests have ever been imparted the benefits of your laws? Your governors have not even communicated their language to their vassals. Nelson and Sydney are illustrious names: the vilest have often been preferred to them, and severely have they been punished for the importunity of their valour. We Frenchmen have undergone much: but throughout the whole territory of France, throughout the range of all her new dominions, not a single man of abilities has been neglected. Remember this, ye who triumph in our excesses. Ye who dread our example, speak plainly; is not this among the examples ye are the least inclined to follow?

'Call my staff and a file of soldiers.

'Gentlemen, he who lies under the pyramid, seems to have possessed a vacant mind and full heart, qualities unfit for a spy: indeed he was not one. He was the friend and companion of that Sydney Smith who did all the mischief at Toulon, when Elliot fled from the city, and who lately, you must well remember, broke some of our pipes before Acre . . a ceremony which gave us to understand, without the formalities of diplomacy, that the Grand Signor declined the honour of our company to take our coffee with him at Constantinople.'

Then turning to the file of soldiers, 'A body lies under the Great Pyramid: go, bury it six feet deep. If there is any man among you capable of writing a good epitaph, and such as the brave owe to the brave, he shall have my authority to

carve it upon the Great Pyramid, and his name may be brought back to me.'

'Allow me the honour,' said a lieutenant; 'I fly to obey.'

'Perhaps', replied the commander-in-chief, 'it may not be amiss to know the character, the adventures, or at least the name' . . .

'No matter, no matter, my general.'

'Take them however,' said Kleber, holding a copy, 'and try your wits.'

'General,' said Menou smiling, 'you never gave a command more certain to be executed. What a blockhead was that king, whoever he was, who built so enormous a monument for a wandering Englishman!'

LORD COLERAINE, REV. MR. BLOOMBURY, AND REV. MR. SWAN

Swan. Whither are you walking so fast, Mr. Bloombury?

Bloombury. My dear brother in Christ, Mr. Swan, I am truly happy to meet you. A fine fresh pleasant day! Any news? I am going to visit Lord Coleraine, who has been attacked by an apoplexy.

Swan. Such was the report I heard yesterday. Accidents of this kind, when they befall the light and thoughtless, shock us even more than when it pleases God to inflict them on the graver and the better. What is more awful than to confront so unexpectedly the gay in spirit with the king of terrors? Sincerely as I grieve to hear of this

appalling visitation, it is consolatory to think that his lordship has brought himself to such a comfortable and cheering frame of mind.

Bloombury. Has he, Mr. Swan? Methinks it is rather early, if he has.

Swan. He must be sensible of his situation, or he would not have required your spiritual aid.

Bloombury. He require it! no more than a rank heathen or unchristened babe. He shall have it though. I will awaken him; I will prick him; I will carry to him the sword of faith; it shall pierce his heart.

Swan. Gently with the rowels on a foundered steed.

Bloombury. Mr. Swan, our pulpits should not smell of the horse-cloth. I never heard that text before.

Swan. You have heard many a worse.

Bloombury. Profane! there are none but from the Bible.

Swan. The application and intent make them more or less good. *Smite* is in that book; *do not smite* is there also. Now which is best?

Bloombury. Both are excellent if they are there: we can only know which is best by opening the volume of grace, and the text that we open first is for our occasion the best of the two.

Swan. There is no logic to place against this. Of course you are intimately acquainted with Lord Coleraine. You can remind him of faults which it is still in his power to correct; of wrongs . . .

Bloombury. I can, and will. When I was in the Guards, he won a trifle of money from me: I shall bring him to a proper sense of his sinfulness in having done it.

Swan. In winning your money ?

Bloombury. He may make some reparation to society for his offence.

Swan. He could not have won your money if you had not played with him.

Bloombury. I was young: he ought to have taught me better.

Swan. He did, if he won much.

Bloombury. He won fifty guineas.

Swan. How ? and were you, Mr. Bloombury, ever a gamester ?

Bloombury. At that time I was not under grace.

Swan. Well, really now I would converse with a dying man on other topics. Comfort him; prepare him for his long journey.

Bloombury. Ay, sing to him; read to him Shakespeare and Cervantes and Froissart ! Make him believe that man is better than a worm, lovelier than a toad, wiser than a deaf adder. Mr. Swan, you are a virtuous man (I mean no offence by calling you so), a good neighbour, a cordial friend, but you are not touched.

Swan. Bloombury, if you are sincere, you will acknowledge that, among your evangelicals, this touching for the most part begins with the pocket, or its environs.

Bloombury. O for shame ! such indecency I never heard ! This comes from your worldly and university view of things, your drinkings and cricketings.

Swan. Too frequently. We want drilling in our armour of faith from the Horse-guards: we want teaching from those who pay fifty guineas the lesson. I am not so unchristian as to deny that you are adepts in the practice of humility,

but it is quite of a new kind. You are humble while you speak, but the reverse when you are spoken to; and, if it were not for your sanctification, I should call you the most arrogant and self-sufficient of sectarians.

Bloombury. We are of the church; the true English church.

Swan. Few sects are not, opposite as they may be. Take the general spirit and practice of it, and tell me what church under heaven is more liberal and forbearing.

Bloombury. Because you forego and forget the most prominent of the thirty-nine articles. There is the sword in them.

Swan. Let it lie there, in God's name.

Bloombury. There is doctrine.

Swan. I take what I understand of it, and would not give a pinch of snuff for the rest. Our Saviour has taught me whatever is useful to know in Christianity. If churches, or any members of them, wanted more from his apostles, I hope they enjoyed what they wanted. The coarser Gentiles must needs have cheese and garlic upon their bread of life: my stomach won't digest them. Those who like the same fare may take it; only let them, when their mouths are full of it, sit quiet, and not open them upon me. We are at the house, I think. Good morning . . A word at parting. May not that musk about you hurt the sick man?

Bloombury. What musk? I protest I never have used any.

Swan. Then the creature that bears it has run between your legs, and rubbed its fur against your dress but lately. Adieu.

Bloombury (*to a Servant*). Is my Lord Coleraine at home ?

Servant. No, sir.

Bloombury. Mark me, young man ; the ways of the world are at an end so near the chamber of death. Tell his lordship that the Reverend . . . better tell him that Captain Frederick Bloombury, late of the Guards, has something of great importance to communicate.

Servant (*returning*). My master desires you to walk up, sir.

Coleraine. I have had the pleasure, I think, of meeting you formerly, Captain Bloombury ; I cannot say exactly where ; for we guardsmen meet in strange places. I had sold out : and, as you are not in uniform, I presume that you too have left the service.

Bloombury. On the contrary, I have just entered it.

Coleraine. Rather late in the day ; is not it ? However, if I can serve you, speak. I feel a difficulty in conversing : this apoplexy has twisted my mouth on one side like a turbot's, and Death and I seem to be grinning for a wager. What do you lift up your eyebrows at ? My sight is imperfect ; they seem to me to be greyish, and fitter for a lieutenant-general than a captain.

Bloombury. I am ageing . . that is, I have a whitish or rather a lighter-coloured hair here and there. Sober thinking brings them.

Coleraine. Particularly when it comes after the thinking that is not quite so sober . . ay, Bloombury ! Excuse me, was it expedient to enter the service so late in life, and in the midst of peace ?

Bloombury. There begins our warfare: these are riotous and bloody times.

Coleraine. They are getting better, if people will let them. What would they have? Would they tear a new coat to pieces because the old one will not fit? How do you like your brother officers?

Bloombury. Reasonably well.

Coleraine. And the service at large?

Bloombury. The sweetest of services is the service of the Lamb.

Coleraine. They told me so . . talking does me harm . . yet I did not feel it. Gentlemen, it is of no use to bleed me any more. You need not feel my pulse . . I am too weak. I am losing my intellects, such as they are. I seem to see faces and to hear words the strangest in the world.

Bloombury. He shuts his eyes and appears to doze a little. He smiles . . a very bad sign in a dying man!

Physician. With deference, I think otherwise, sir. He cannot live the day through, but he is in full possession of his senses. If you have any secret, anything interesting to his family, any omission to suggest, we will retire. Let me however request of you, not to disturb him on matters of business.

Bloombury. The Lord forbid!

Physician. He seems quite tranquil, and may go off so.

Bloombury. In that perilous state! It is the dimple of a whirlpool, at the bottom whereof is hell. I will arouse him: I will wrestle with Christ for him.

Physician. In another ring then: I keep the ground here.

Bloombury. You physicians are materialists.

Physician. Undoubtedly, sir, you would desire to be the contrary ?

Bloombury. Undoubtedly, indeed.

Physician. You methodists then are immaterialists ?

Bloombury. Ho ! ho ! grace and election and sanctification are things immaterial !

Physician. Which of you ever has preached gratitude to God ; in another word, contentment ? Which of you has ever told a man that his principal duty is to love his neighbour ?

Bloombury. Who dares lie, in the face of God ? We love the Lamb ; the rest follows.

Physician. Unless the rest (as you call it) precedes, the Lamb will never be caught by you, whine to him and pipe to him as you may. Love to God must be conveyed and expressed by a mediator.

Bloombury. There you talk soundly.

Physician. You can show your love to him only through the images he has set on every side of you.

Bloombury. Idolater ! When I uplift my eyes to heaven and see Jupiter (so called) and Saturn (name of foolishness) and all the starry host . . .

Physician. You see things less worthy of your attention than a gang of gipsies in a grassy lane. You cannot ask Saturn (name of foolishness) nor Jupiter (so called) whether he wants anything, nor could you give it if he did : but one or other of these poor creatures may be befriended in some way, may in short be made better and honester and cleanlier.

Bloombury. What ! no prayers, I suppose, nor thanksgivings ?

Physician. Catch the prayer that is rising to God, and act for him; receive in turn the thanksgiving; he authorises and commands you. If there is a man in your parish who wants a meal while you eat two in the day, let me advise you neither to sing a psalm nor to bend a knee until you have divided your quartern loaf with him.

I must go in and see my patient: if you follow, step gently.

Coleraine. I beg your pardon, Captain Bloombury: how long have you been waiting?

Bloombury. An instant only, my lord. I hope your lordship has benefited by your easy slumber.

Coleraine. I feel no pain.

Bloombury. Unhappy man!

Coleraine. Thank you: I am sure you are.[1]

Bloombury. The Lord sends hither me, his unworthy servant, O George Viscount Coleraine, to bring you unto him.

Coleraine. I am obliged to you both.

Bloombury. Well may you be. You have led as wild and wicked a life as one could wish. Repent! repent!

Coleraine. Of what? For, faith! there are so many things, I cannot see which to take hold on.

Bloombury. If I could suggest any other, I would do it in preference. I know but one.

Coleraine. Speak out: don't be modest.

Bloombury. You had formerly a strange itch for gaming.

Coleraine. Not I indeed: but one can game when one cannot do the pleasanter thing.

[1] Misunderstanding; and supposing he said '*I am glad to hear it*,' or some such thing.

Bloombury. You led me into, or at least you countenanced me in, that vice.

Coleraine. Which ?

Bloombury. Gaming.

Coleraine. Pardon me, my worthy friend ; we never were intimate, till now. Charmed as I certainly should have been by your acquaintance, it cannot be more than once that we met before : for in good society no one forgets names or faces, unless of tradespeople and Jews.

Bloombury. On that one evening I lost fifty guineas to you.

Coleraine. Express no uneasiness ; do not trouble yourself, Captain Bloombury ; lay it upon the table. If it had escaped your recollection, I assure you it has escaped mine too. Do not, I entreat you, make yourself at all uncomfortable about it. I never said a word upon your leaving town and forgetting me.

Bloombury. Forgetting you, my lord ! I paid the money down in five *rouleaux*. I wish I had kept it for the poor.

Coleraine. Pooh ! another fifty is just as good as that. What do the poor care whether it is packed in *rouleaux* or not ? It is unpacked, I will answer for it, long before they touch it.

Bloombury. If I had either that or another to give the broken in spirit, the sick and weary . . .

Coleraine. O ! I now understand you. Upon my soul, you have a most compassionate and significant eye. Give me your hand, my good fellow ! don't distress yourself. Yes, my dear Bloombury, times have been hard with me heretofore ; but I never was broken in spirit ; and now I want nothing.

Bloombury. Many whom I have visited in their last hours have lent money to the Lord, unasked.

Coleraine. Impudent dogs!

Bloombury. I part with mine willingly: it is only a snare of Satan. Yet those who have no families have thought of me.

Coleraine. And those who have families too; for, I warrant, one of the flock (to say the least) reminded them. You are still a fine stout fellow.

Bloombury. I do not understand your lordship: I am, as the Lord made me, a sinner!

Coleraine. The deuce you are! I wish I could be! Do not groan; do not be uncomfortable; I am no worse, though I sighed a little.

Bloombury. Ah my Lord Coleraine! If you could sightly dispose of your soul and of your superfluities, then might you well exclaim, 'O Death! where is thy sting?'

Coleraine. I should not venture: he might show it me.

Bloombury. He could not; I defy him.

Coleraine. You are braver: he is one too much for me: he has got me down.

Bloombury. If your lordship would take courage and resolve, it is not even yet too late for the labour of love.

Coleraine. It would be a labour indeed for me.

Bloombury. Try, strive.

Coleraine. I am no more up to it than I am to the labours of Hercules. Ah, my dear Captain Bloombury, you are much more capable of such feats: I wish you joy of them: I have bidden them farewell. I begin to think that the world is a very bad world, and that everything goes amiss in it.

Bloombury. Excellent thought! if it had but

come earlier. We should think so all our lives: it would prepare us for heaven. Let us remove from the sick room all that ever gave you uneasiness by feeding your vices. I would tear off the old man from you. . . . . .

Coleraine. The vagabond! what! is he here? Who let him in while I was sleeping? Tear him off, with a vengeance, the old thief! Downstairs with him . . I paid the rogue fifteen per cent.

Bloombury. Be tranquillized, my lord; you misunderstood me. I would do as much for your lordship, as my brother in Christ, the reverend Christopher Rawbottom, a rooting man, did in regard to your deceased brother.

Coleraine. What did he?

Bloombury. Being in prison, a sufferer from false witnesses, he begat him, as Paul begat Onesimus, in his chains.

Coleraine. I don't believe it; I never heard it whispered or hinted. My mother was a very different sort of woman, and would hardly run after a fusty old goat, tied by the leg in a court of the Fleet.

Bloombury. O my lord! how little are you accustomed to the language of the Holy Scriptures! I speak figuratively.

Coleraine. Egad, did you, Bloombury?

Bloombury. I cannot bring your lordship to think seriously upon death.

Coleraine. Excuse me, Captain Bloombury, it is you who think the least seriously. It is you who would ask him where his sting lies, and who would challenge him outright.

Bloombury. My lord, if I am so unfortunate that I cannot be of use to your lordship in your

interests, should there be remaining any slight matter in the temporal and personal, wherein my humble abilities could be serviceable to you, I entreat you to command me . . He meditates ! who knows what he may do yet ! . . It would be but just.

Coleraine. Have you a pencil ?

Bloombury. Yes, my lord, yes . . but pen-and-ink would be better . . let me run and find one.

Coleraine. No, no, no.

Bloombury. O yes, my lord . . Gentlemen, pray walk in again : his lordship is most clear in his intellects . . he has a short codicil to add. I carry the ink . . Is this pen a good one ? could he write legibly with it ?

Physician. Perfectly. I wrote with it early in the morning.

Bloombury. My lord, the gentlemen have returned ; they are waiting ; here are pen, ink, and paper.

Coleraine. Favour me, Captain Bloombury ; write.

Bloombury. It would not do, my lord : if the learned doctor would undertake it, your lordship might sign it . . and indeed might sign first.

Coleraine. Well, then, doctor, write ; will you ?

Physician. I am ready, my lord.

Coleraine.

> Death ! We don't halt then ! march I must,
> Mortally as I hate the dust.
> I should have been in rare high glee
> To make an April-fool of thee.

Bloombury. Worldly-minded man ! There are no hopes then !

Physician. I told you so, sir ; but although he knew it, you might have spoken lower.

APPENDIX

APOLOGUE OF CRITOBULUS

Marcus Tullius relates to his brother Quinctus the allegory of Critobulus concerning Truth

'I was wandering', says Critobulus, 'in the midst of a forest, and came suddenly to a small round fountain or pool, with several white flowers (I remember) and broad leaves in the centre of it, but clear of them at the sides, and of a water the most pellucid. Suddenly a very beautiful figure came from behind me, and stood between me and the fountain. I was amazed. I could not distinguish the sex, the form being youthful and the face toward the water, on which it was gazing and bending over its reflection, like another Hylas or Narcissus. It then stooped and adorned itself with a few of the simplest flowers, and seemed the fonder and tenderer of those which had borne the impression of its graceful feet: and having done so, it turned round and looked upon me with an air of indifference and unconcern. The longer I fixed my eyes on her, for I now discovered it was a female, the more ardent I became and the more embarrassed. She perceived it, and smiled. Her eyes were large and serene; not very thoughtful, as if perplexed, nor very playful, as if easily to be won; and her countenance was tinged with so delightful a colour, that it appeared an effluence from an irradiated cloud passing over

it in the heavens. She gave me the idea, from her graceful attitude, that, although adapted to the perfection of activity, she felt rather an inclination for repose. I would have taken her hand: "You shall presently," said she; and never fell on mortal a diviner glance than on me. I told her so. She replied, "You speak well." I then fancied she was simple, and weak, and fond of flattery, and began to flatter her. She turned her face away from me, and answered nothing. I declared my excessive love: she went some paces off. I swore it was impossible for one who had ever seen her to live without her: she went several paces farther. "By the immortal gods!" I cried, "you shall not leave me." She turned round and looked benignly; but shook her head. "You are another's then! Say it! say it! utter the word once from your lips . . and let me die." She smiled, more melancholy than before, and replied, "O Critobulus! I am indeed another's; I am a God's." The air of the interior heavens seemed to pierce me as she spoke; and I trembled as impassioned men may tremble once. After a pause, "I might have thought it!" cried I: "why then come before me and torment me?" She began to play and trifle with me, as became her age (I fancied) rather than her engagement, and she placed my hand upon the flowers in her lap without a blush. The whole fountain would not at that moment have assuaged my thirst. The sound of the breezes and of the birds around us, even the sound of her own voice, were all confounded in my ear, as colours are in the fulness and intensity of light. She said many pleasing things to me, to the earlier and greater part of which I was insensible; but in the

midst of those which I could hear and was listening to attentively, she began to pluck out the grey hairs from my head, and to tell me that the others too were of a hue not very agreeable. My heart sank within me. Presently there was hardly a limb or feature without its imperfection. "O!" cried I in despair, "you have been used to the Gods: you must think so: but among men I do not believe I am considered as ill-made or unseemly." She paid little attention to my words or my vexation; and when she had gone on with my defects for some time longer, in the same calm tone and with the same sweet countenance, she began to declare that she had much affection for me, and was desirous of inspiring it in return! I was about to answer her with rapture, when on a sudden, in her girlish humour she stuck a thorn, wherewith she had been playing, into that part of the body which supports us when we sit. I know not whether it went deeper than she intended, but catching at it, I leaped up in shame and anger, and at the same moment felt something upon my shoulder. It was an armlet inscribed with letters of bossy adamant, "Jove to his daughter Truth."

'She stood again before me at a distance, and said gracefully, "Critobulus! I am too young and simple for you; but you will love me still, and not be made unhappy by it in the end. Farewell."'

THE DREAM OF BOCCACCIO

Boccaccio relates to Petrarca his dream of Fiametta, his dead love

Boccaccio. I prayed ; and my breast, after some few tears, grew calmer. Yet sleep did not ensue until the break of morning, when the dropping of soft rain on the leaves of the fig-tree at the window, and the chirping of a little bird, to tell another there was shelter under them, brought me repose and slumber. Scarcely had I closed my eyes, if indeed time can be reckoned any more in sleep than in heaven, when my Fiametta seemed to have led me into the meadow. You will see it below you : turn away that branch : gently ! gently ! do not break it ; for the little bird sat there.

Petrarca. I think, Giovanni, I can divine the place. Although this fig-tree, growing out of the wall between the cellar and us, is fantastic enough in its branches, yet that other which I see yonder, bent down and forced to crawl along the grass by the prepotency of the young shapely walnut-tree, is much more so. It forms a seat, about a cubit above the ground, level and long enough for several.

Boccaccio. Ha ! you fancy it must be a favourite spot with me, because of the two strong forked stakes wherewith it is propped and supported !

Petrarca. Poets know the haunts of poets at first sight ; and he who loved Laura . . . O Laura ! did I say he who *loved* thee ? . . . hath whisperings where those feet would wander which have been restless after Fiametta.

Boccaccio. It is true, my imagination has often conducted her thither; but here in this chamber she appeared to me more visibly in a dream.

'Thy prayers have been heard, O Giovanni,' said she.

I sprang to embrace her.

'Do not spill the water! Ah! you have spilt a part of it.'

I then observed in her hand a crystal vase. A few drops were sparkling on the sides and running down the rim: a few were trickling from the base and from the hand that held it.

'I must go down to the brook,' said she, 'and fill it again as it was filled before.'

What a moment of agony was this to me! Could I be certain how long might be her absence? She went: I was following: she made a sign for me to turn back: I disobeyed her only an instant: yet my sense of disobedience, increasing my feebleness and confusion, made me lose sight of her. In the next moment she was again at my side, with the cup quite full. I stood motionless: I feared my breath might shake the water over. I looked her in the face for her commands . . and to see it . . to see it so calm, so beneficent, so beautiful. I was forgetting what I had prayed for, when she lowered her head, tasted of the cup, and gave it me. I drank; and suddenly sprang forth before me, many groves and palaces and gardens, and their statues and their avenues, and their labyrinths of alaternus and bay, and alcoves of citron, and watchful loopholes in the retirements of impenetrable pomegranate. Farther off, just below where the fountain slipt away from its marble hall and guardian gods, arose, from their beds of moss

and drosera and darkest grass, the sisterhood of oleanders, fond of tantalising with their bosomed flowers and their moist and pouting blossoms the little shy rivulet, and of covering its face with all the colours of the dawn. My dream expanded and moved forward. I trod again the dust of Posilipo, soft as the feathers in the wings of Sleep. I emerged on Baia; I crossed her innumerable arches; I loitered in the breezy sunshine of her mole; I trusted the faithful seclusion of her caverns, the keepers of so many secrets; and I reposed on the buoyancy of her tepid sea. Then Naples, and her theatres and her churches, and grottoes and dells and forts and promontories, rushed forward in confusion, now among soft whispers, now among sweetest sounds, and subsided, and sank, and disappeared. Yet a memory seemed to come fresh from every one: each had time enough for its tale, for its pleasure, for its reflection, for its pang. As I mounted with silent steps the narrow staircase of the old palace, how distinctly did I feel against the palm of my hand the coldness of that smooth stone-work, and the greater of the cramps of iron in it!

'Ah me! is this forgetting?' cried I anxiously to Fiametta.

'We must recall these scenes before us,' she replied: 'such is the punishment of them. Let us hope and believe that the apparition, and the compunction which must follow it, will be accepted as the full penalty, and that both will pass away almost together.'

I feared to lose anything attendant on her presence: I feared to approach her forehead with my lips: I feared to touch the lily on its long wavy

leaf in her hair, which filled my whole heart with fragrance. Venerating, adoring, I bowed my head at last to kiss her snow-white robe, and trembled at my presumption. And yet the effulgence of her countenance vivified while it chastened me. I loved her . . . I must not say *more* than ever . . . *better* than ever; it was Fiametta who had inhabited the skies. As my hand opened toward her,

'Beware!' said she, faintly smiling; 'beware, Giovanni! Take only the crystal; take it, and drink again.'

'Must all be then forgotten?' said I sorrowfully.

'Remember your prayer and mine, Giovanni? Shall both have been granted . . . O how much worse than in vain?'

I drank instantly; I drank largely. How cool my bosom grew; how could it grow so cool before her! But it was not to remain in its quiescency; its trials were not yet over. I will not, Francesco! no, I may not commemorate the incidents she related to me, nor which of us said, 'I blush for having loved *first*;' nor which of us replied, 'Say *least*, say *least*, and blush again.'

The charm of the words (for I felt not the encumbrance of the body nor the acuteness of the spirit) seemed to possess me wholly. Although the water gave me strength and comfort, and somewhat of celestial pleasure, many tears fell around the border of the vase as she held it up before me, exhorting me to take courage, and inviting me with more than exhortation to accomplish my deliverance. She came nearer, more tenderly, more earnestly; she held the dewy globe with both hands, leaning forward, and sighed and shook her head, drooping at my pusillanimity. It

was only when a ringlet had touched the rim, and perhaps the water (for a sunbeam on the surface could never have given it such a golden hue) that I took courage, clasped it, and exhausted it. Sweet as was the water, sweet as was the serenity it gave me . . . alas ! that also which it moved away from me was sweet !

' This time you can trust me alone,' said she, and parted my hair, and kissed my brow. Again she went toward the brook : again my agitation, my weakness, my doubt, came over me : nor could I see her while she raised the water, nor knew I whence she drew it. When she returned, she was close to me at once : she smiled : her smile pierced me to the bones : it seemed an angel's. She sprinkled the pure water on me ; she looked most fondly ; she took my hand ; she suffered me to press hers to my bosom ; but, whether by design I cannot tell, she let fall a few drops of the chilly element between.

' And now, O my beloved ! ' said she, ' we have consigned to the bosom of God our earthly joys and sorrows. The joys cannot return, let not the sorrows. These alone would trouble my repose among the blessed.'

' Trouble thy repose ! Fiametta ! Give me the chalice ! ' cried I . . . ' not a drop will I leave in it, not a drop.'

' Take it ! ' said that soft voice. ' O now most dear Giovanni ! I know thou hast strength enough ; and there is but little . . . at the bottom lies our first kiss.'

' Mine ! didst thou say, beloved one ? and is that left thee still ? '

' *Mine*,' said she, pensively ; and as she abased

her head, the broad leaf of the lily hid her brow and her eyes; the light of heaven shone through the flower.

'O Fiametta! Fiametta!' cried I in agony, 'God is the God of mercy, God is the God of love . . . can I, can I ever?' I struck the chalice against my head, unmindful that I held it; the water covered my face and my feet. I started up, not yet awake, and I heard the name of Fiametta in the curtains.

THE DREAM OF PETRARCA

An Allegory of Love, Sleep, and Death

WEARIED with the length of my walk over the mountains, and finding a soft old molehill, covered with grey grass, by the way-side, I laid my head upon it, and slept. I cannot tell how long it was before a species of dream or vision came over me.

Two beautiful youths appeared beside me; each was winged; but the wings were hanging down, and seemed ill adapted to flight. One of them, whose voice was the softest I ever heard, looking at me frequently, said to the other,

'He is under my guardianship for the present: do not awaken him with that feather.'

Methought, hearing the whisper, I saw something like the feather on an arrow; and then the arrow itself; the whole of it, even to the point; although he carried it in such a manner that it was difficult at first to discover more than a palm's length of it: the rest of the shaft, and the whole of the barb, was behind his ankles.

'This feather never awakens any one,' replied he, rather petulantly; 'but it brings more of confident security, and more of cherished dreams, than you without me are capable of imparting.'

'Be it so!' answered the gentler . . 'none is less inclined to quarrel or dispute than I am. Many whom you have wounded grievously, call upon me for succour. But so little am I disposed to thwart you, it is seldom I venture to do more for them than to whisper a few words of comfort in passing. How many reproaches on these occasions have been cast upon me for indifference and infidelity! Nearly as many, and nearly in the same terms, as upon you!'

'Odd enough that we, O Sleep! should be thought so alike!' said Love, contemptuously. 'Yonder is he who bears a nearer resemblance to you: the dullest have observed it.' I fancied I turned my eyes to where he was pointing, and saw at a distance the figure he designated. Meanwhile the contention went on uninterruptedly. Sleep was slow in asserting his power or his benefits. Love recapitulated them; but only that he might assert his own above them. Suddenly he called on me to decide, and to choose my patron. Under the influence, first of the one, then of the other, I sprang from repose to rapture, I alighted from rapture on repose . . and knew not which was sweetest. Love was very angry with me, and declared he would cross me throughout the whole of my existence. Whatever I might on other occasions have thought of his veracity, I now felt too surely the conviction that he would keep his word. At last, before the close of the altercation, the third Genius had

advanced, and stood near us. I cannot tell how I knew him, but I knew him to be the Genius of Death. Breathless as I was at beholding him, I soon became familiar with his features. First they seemed only calm; presently they grew contemplative; and lastly beautiful: those of the Graces themselves are less regular, less harmonious, less composed. Love glanced at him unsteadily, with a countenance in which there was somewhat of anxiety, somewhat of disdain; and cried, 'Go away! go away! nothing that thou touchest, lives.'

'Say rather, child!' replied the advancing form, and advancing grew loftier and statelier, 'Say rather that nothing of beautiful or of glorious lives its own true life until my wing hath passed over it.'

Love pouted, and rumpled and bent down with his forefinger the stiff short feathers on his arrow-head; but replied not. Although he frowned worse than ever, and at me, I dreaded him less and less, and scarcely looked toward him The milder and calmer Genius, the third, in proportion as I took courage to contemplate him, regarded me with more and more complacency. He held neither flower nor arrow, as the others did; but, throwing back the clusters of dark curls that overshadowed his countenance, he presented to me his hand, openly and benignly. I shrank on looking at him so near, and yet I sighed to love him. He smiled, not without an expression of pity, at perceiving my diffidence, my timidity: for I remembered how soft was the hand of Sleep, how warm and entrancing was Love's. By degrees, I became ashamed of my ingratitude; and

turning my face away, I held out my arms, and felt my neck within his. Composure strewed and allayed all the throbbings of my bosom; the coolness of freshest morning breathed around; the heavens seemed to open above me; while the beautiful cheek of my deliverer rested on my head. I would now have looked for those others; but knowing my intention by my gesture, he said consolatorily,

'Sleep is on his way to the Earth, where many are calling him; but it is not to these he hastens; for every call only makes him fly farther off. Sedately and gravely as he looks, he is nearly as capricious and volatile as the more arrogant and ferocious one.'

'And Love!' said I, 'whither is he departed? If not too late, I would propitiate and appease him.'

'He who cannot follow me, he who cannot overtake and pass me,' said the Genius, 'is unworthy of the name, the most glorious in earth or heaven. Look up! Love is yonder, and ready to receive thee.'

I looked: the earth was under me: I saw only the clear blue sky, and something brighter above it.

LIST OF PERSONS INTRODUCED IN THIS SELECTION OF 'IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS'

Aeschines (389–314 B. C.), Athenian orator, opposed to the anti-Macedonian policy of Demosthenes; compelled to leave Athens 330 B. C.

Aesop (*c.* 570 B. C.), the writer of fables, said by Herodotus to have been the fellow-slave of Rhodope.

Alexander (356–323 B. C.), king of Macedon, professed divine paternity in order to have a valid claim to the crown of Egypt; visited the temple of Hammon (Zeus Ammon) at the age of 25.

Alexis (1690–1718), eldest son of Peter the Great, opposed to his father's policy, executed on a charge of high treason.

Artabanus (*c.* 480 B. C.), uncle of Xerxes, said to have advised the king against the Grecian war.

Ascham, Roger (1515–68), classical scholar, tutor to the princess Elizabeth.

Bacon, Francis (1561–1626), appointed Chancellor 1618; accused of bribery, convicted, and deprived 1621.

Blake, Humphrey (*c.* A.D. 1650), brother of Admiral Blake. The story here dramatized is said by the *Dict. of Nat. Biog.* to be 'utterly false'.

Blake, Robert (1599–1657), admiral of the Commonwealth; according to Landor, 'the archetype of England's Nelsons, Collingwoods, and Pellews.' The victory referred to is that over the Spanish fleet at Santa Cruz, 1657.

Bloombury. *See* Coleraine.

Boccaccio, Giovanni (1313–75), Italian poet and novelist.

Boleyn, Anne (1507–36), second wife of Henry VIII.

Bossuet, Jacques Bénigne (1627–1704), bishop of Meaux, one of the greatest French orators, opponent of Fénélon and Mme de Guyon.

Bothwell, James Hepburn, Earl of (1536 ?–78), third husband of Mary, queen of Scots; carried her off, with or without her consent, April 21, 1567, married her May 15.

Caesar, C. Julius (102–44 B. C.), united at the time of the *Conversation*, about nine years before the Civil War, in a private agreement with Pompey and Crassus.

Calvin, John (1509–1564), one of the early Reformers, taught predestination.

Catharine II (1729–96), Empress of Russia; in 1745 married Peter III, grandson of Peter the Great; in 1762 led a revolution ending in his flight, abdication, and murder; afterwards reigned alone till her death.

Coleraine, George Hanger, fourth Baron (1751 ?–1824), eccentric officer, friend of the Prince Regent. There is no trace of Bloombury and Swan; they are probably creations of Landor's own mind.

Constantia (*c.* 1190), wife of the Emperor Henry VI, aunt of William II of Sicily, on whose death in 1189 Henry claimed the throne of Sicily on her behalf.

Cotton, Charles (1630–87), author of a 'second part' of Walton's *Compleat Angler*, 1676.

Cromwell, Oliver (1599–1658), at the time of the *Conversation* (*c.* 1648) Lieutenant-General of the Parliamentary forces.

Dashkoff, Princess Catharine (1744–1810), favourite companion of the Empress Catharine's, took a leading part in the revolution of 1762.

Edward I (1239–1307), king of England, the 'Hammer of the Scots'.

Epictetus (*c.* 50–100), famous Stoic philosopher, slave of Epaphroditus, Nero's secretary.

Epicurus (342–270 B. C.), philosopher, born at Samos, taught at Athens.

Essex, Robert Devereux, Earl of (1566–1601), Lieutenant and Governor-General of Ireland, 1599; implicated in a charge of treason after his return, and executed 1601.

Este, Leonora di (1563–81), sister of Alfonso di Este, Duke of Ferrara; reported to have been loved by Tasso.

Eugenius the Fourth (1383–1447), elected Pope 1431.

Fontanges, Marie-Angélique Scoraille de Roussille, duchesse de (1661–81), one of the favourites of Louis XIV.

Gaunt, Elizabeth (*d.* 1685), accused of high treason before

Judge Jeffreys for sheltering one of Monmouth's supporters, condemned and burnt.

Godiva (*c.* 1057), wife of Leofric, Earl of Mercia.

Grey, Lady Jane (1537–54), married in 1553 to Lord Guildford Dudley.

Hannibal (? 249–183 B.C.), invaded Italy 218 B.C., recalled 203.

Henry IV (1367–1413), king of England. The Parliament of 1404 had continual disputes with the Crown.

Henry VIII (1491–1547), king of England; 45 years old at the time of the *Conversation*.

Hooker, Richard (1554–1600), theologian. The *Conversation* is supposed to take place *c.* 1621, which would be some twenty years after Hooker's death.

Jeanne D'Arc, Maid of Orleans (1412–31), led the French armies; taken prisoner 1430, burnt 1431.

Joanna (1328–85), daughter of Edmund Woodstock, youngest son of Edward I, and wife to the Black Prince. Protected John of Gaunt from the Londoners, 1377.

John of Gaunt (1340–99), Duke of Lancaster, fourth son of Edward III. He 'was suspected of aiming at the crown in the beginning of Richard's minority, which, increasing the hatred of the people against him for favouring the sect of Wicliffe, excited them to demolish his house and to demand his impeachment.' (Landor's Note.)

Kleber, Jean Baptiste (1753–1800), French general, served with distinction in Revolutionary army, left in command in Egypt on Napoleon's return to France.

La Chaise, François d'Aix de (1624–1709), Jesuit, confessor to Louis XIV.

Leofric (*d.* 1057), Earl of Mercia, one of the great Saxon earls in the time of Edward the Confessor.

Leontion (*c.* 300 B. C.), a friend and disciple of Epicurus.

Lippi, Fra Filippo (1406–69), monk and painter. Released from his vows by Pope Pius II, 1458.

Lisle, Alice (1614 ?–85), accused of high treason before Judge Jeffreys for sheltering certain of Monmouth's supporters; condemned and beheaded, 1685.

Louis XIV (1638–1715), king of France.

Lucullus, L. Licinius (110–57 B. C.), conqueror of Mithridates, king of Pontus. Superseded by Pompey, 66 B. C.; held his triumph 63 B. C., and afterwards retired into private life.

Magliabechi, Antonio da Marco (1633–1714), librarian to the Grand Duke of Tuscany; had an extraordinary passion for books and for knowledge, and a wonderful memory.

Mahomet (571–631), founder of Islam.

Marcellus, Marcus Claudius (268?–208 B. C.), five times consul, defeated Hannibal several times during the Carthaginian invasion of Italy; killed in skirmish near Venusia.

Marius, Gaius (157–87 B. C.), seven times consul. At the siege of Numantia he was a young and undistinguished soldier, but the general, Scipio, had already taken notice of him, 'and, when he was asked who, in case of accident to him, should succeed to the chief command, replied, *Perhaps this man*, touching the shoulder of Marius.' (Landor's Note.)

Mary, Queen of Scots (1542–87); after the murder of Darnley, her second husband, February 1567, she was carried off by Bothwell, one of the parties to the murder, and married to him, May 1567.

Melancthon, Philip (1497–1560), one of the early Reformers.

Metellus, C. Caecilius (?–91 B. C.?), youngest of four brothers. 'He served as tribune before Numantia, where Scipio said of him, "If his mother had given birth to a fifth, she would have brought forth an ass."' (Landor's Note.)

Middleton, Conyers (1683–1750), liberal theologian.

Noble, Walter (*c.* 1650), 'represented the city of Lichfield; he lived familiarly with the best patriots of the age, remonstrated with Cromwell, and retired into private life on the punishment of Charles.' (Landor's Note.) His real name was Michael.

Oldways, William (*c.* 1630), an imaginary character, supposed to have been curate to John Donne.

Panigarola, Francesco (1548–1594), bishop of Asti, a noted preacher of the time.

Peter the Great (1672–1725), Czar of Russia.

Petrarca, Francesco (1304–74), Italian poet.

Phocion (*c.* 402–317 B. C.), Athenian statesman of the pro-Macedonian party, afterwards the friend of Alexander.

Rhadamistus (*c.* A.D. 50), king of Armenia, murdered his uncle and cousins to gain the crown. Driven out by the people on account of his tyrannies.

Rhodope (*c.* 570 B. C.), a Thracian by birth, brought to Egypt, where she grew famous for her beauty and wealth;

it was at one time believed she had caused the building of the third pyramid.

Savage, Sir Arnold (*c.* 1400), twice Speaker of the Commons, 1401 and 1404; presented their demands for a redress of grievances.

Seneca, L. Annaeus (3 B. C.–A.D. 65), Stoic philosopher, tutor to Nero, acquired vast wealth.

Sergius (*c.* 600), Nestorian monk, reported at one time to have assisted Mahomet in writing the Koran.

Sorel, Agnes (1422–50), mistress of Charles VII, king of France, whose weakness hampered and eventually destroyed Jeanne d'Arc. Tradition (adopted by Landor) attributed her birth to the year 1409.

Spenser, Edmund (1552 ?–99), appointed in 1580 secretary to the Lord Deputy of Ireland, where his house and, according to one account, his child were burnt in the wars; returned to England and died, 1599.

Swan. *See* Coleraine.

Tancredi (? –1194), illegitimate son of Roger of Apulia, brother of William II of Sicily, on whose death Tancredi was chosen king by a part of the Sicilian nobility.

Ternissa (*c.* 300 B.C.), practically a creation of Landor's, though the name may have been suggested by that of Themista, a friend of Epicurus.

Tiberius (42 B. C.–A.D. 37), son of Livia, afterwards the wife of Augustus; became Emperor A.D. 14.

Vipsania (? –A.D. 20), married to Tiberius, who was compelled by Augustus to divorce her and to marry Julia, Augustus's own daughter.

Wallace, William (1272 ?–1305), Scottish patriot; led the resistance to Edward I, seized by treachery and executed.

Walton, Izaak (1593–1683), author of the *Compleat Angler*, pub. 1653.

Xerxes (? –465 B.C.), king of Persia; invaded Greece, 480 B.C.

Zenobia (*c.* A. D. 50), wife of Rhadamistus, with whom she fled.

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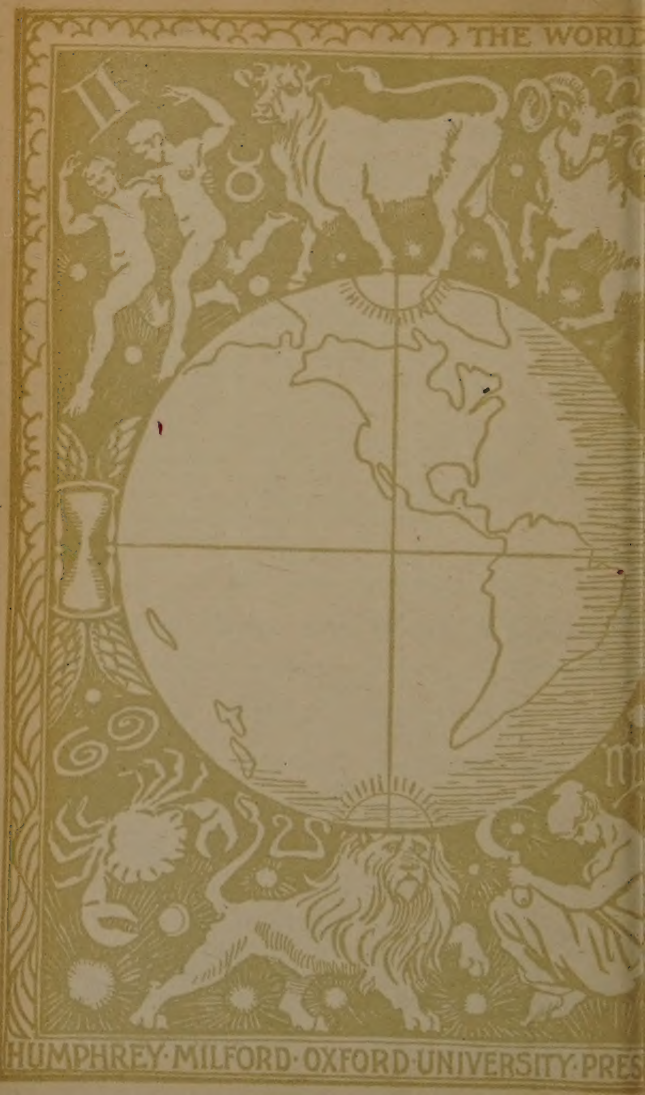
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